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AUSTRALIAN AND BRITISH SOCCER WEEKLY

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AND THEN THERE WERE SIX

By Micky Brock

As the headline states 'And Then There Were Six'.

With Marconi Fairfield (full match report on page 10) joining South Melbourne, Adelaide City, Sydney United, Wollongong City and Carlton in the fight to become Champions of Australia, the Top Six make-up is complete.

Carlton have created history in their first NSL season by making it into the play-offs, thereby mixing it with the 'elite' clubs in the count-down to the Grand Final.

Melbourne Knights missed out in the elimination game, at Marconi Stadium, when they received a sound 0-5 thrashing at the hands of the home side.

The finals series kicks-off this weekend with the first-leg matches between:

Wollongong City v Adelaide City (Brandon Park)
Marconi Fairfield v Sydney Utd (Marconi Stadium)

The second-leg matches will be played the following week with the loser of each being eliminated.

Carlton v South Melbourne, who have a week off before playing again, resume their battle on April 26, with the second-leg taking place on May 3, the loser going on to meet the winner of the previous matches, and the winner advancing straight into the Grand Final on May 17.

SHE'S A TIGER

The gorgeous Ms Belinda Paino, an aerobics instructor and Soccer fan, took some out here to model the new playing strip of the Leichhardt Tigers.
See more of Belinda on page 2.

TO ENTER OUR FREE BOOK COMPETITION, SIMPLY FILL IN THE BLANKS AND POST COUPON TO OUR USUAL ADDRESS.

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(SEE COMPETITION RULES ON PAGE 21)

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Editorial

The World Cup is rapidly approaching, that much we know, but what of the teams competing? What of the players, venues, history and mystique that surrounds the competition etc.?

Once again, SBS have done Australia proud with their ***'World Cup Countdown'*** show which begins this Friday night (April 17) at 8.00pm (7.30 in S.A.), and continues for the eight successive weeks in this timeslot.

Having been lucky enough to preview parts of the program, I can honestly suggest you don't miss it. Episode one looks at Group C, which contains France of course, and reveals some very interesting statistics about the teams, fringe players, stadiums (which Les Murray will be looking at using film shot on location), local customs and sights, World Cup history, interviews and much, much more.

Murray will front the show, ably assisted by Johnny Warren, and the format will consist of SBS footage and a mix of items from the European company CSI, which mainly profiles and interviews the players such as Zinedine Zidane, Ronaldo among others.

Each week the show will look at a specific Group, from A to H, and examine the qualifying games etc. of the teams in question (which will include that fateful night in 1997 at the MCG).

The history will concern most of the major footage, previous World Cups and the players who made the tournament what it is today. Who can forget Pele, Paolo Rossi, Geoff Hurst or Johan Cruyff to mention but a few.

Les Murray

All in all, ***'World Cup Countdown'*** gives the viewer a fascinating insight into this planet's largest single sporting competition. So, if there isn't something there for everyone, you're a hard audience to please.

If you can't get to watch it at this time, make sure you stick the video on, you will be pleasantly surprised.

★★★

And another thing.

Late last week, a media release was received at ABSW Towers which indicated that members of the soccer community had banded together and were to nationally unify the code and define clear pathways for soccer players from the U/6 age group through to professional NSL players.

Johnny Warren

"At last!", thought I rather naively.

I kept waiting to read that this group, headed by George Negus, were to involve the largest soccer competition in Australia, namely the Bill Turner Cup.

It was when I reached the end of the final word that it suddenly dawned on me that, once again, yet another committee had passed this particular schools competition by, even with its 750 entrants.

Put another way, based on 16 players a squad, 12,000 players, boys and girls, have been ignored. Added to that are coaches, parents, teachers, school mates, relatives etc. who have, to all intents and purposes, been given the flick.

Is it really me or does the phrase 'anyone really know what is going on?', spring to mind?

Isn't it time that an established soccer competition, the largest in Australia, were thought about as a starting base — or would that tread on to many egos?

Professionalism?

Don't make me laugh.

Micky Brock

TIGERS CLAW MAJOR NEW SPONSOR

By John Economos

NSW glamour Super League club Leichhardt Tigers late last week, at the new Apia-Leichhardt Tigers' Club on Parramatta Road Camperdown, proudly signed a new and major sponsorship deal for this season.

The Leichhardt Tigers' new major sponsor for the 1998 season is 'ONECALL TRAVEL GROUP', and the sponsorship contract is believed to involve a five figure cash deal plus services and product.

Signing of the 'Onecall Travel Group' sponsorship deal: Onecall Travel's Director Anthony Avati, the Tigers' President Tony Raciti (centre) and Onecall Travel's General Manager, Marcel Lai.

Tigers' president, Tony Raciti, stated to ABSW: "Leichhardt Tigers are most grateful and very proud to have on board 'Onecall Travel' as our major sponsor.

"Onecall Travel is a new player in the Soccer market, but nevertheless is most progressive and ambitious, as are the Leichhardt Tigers.

"The two bodies have similar objectives.

"Today the Leichhardt Tigers is a high profile club in the NSW Super League and we aim to make 'Onecall' very proud to have been associated with the club."

Mr Anthony Avati, Director of Marketing and Administration of 'Onecall Travel', stated to ABSW: "Having met with and got to know Mr Raciti well over the past few weeks, our company is confident that our involvement with the Leichhardt Tigers will prove to be valuable and of a most mutual benefit.

"Onecall Travel is proud to now be associated with the Tigers and we believe that this year they will have a renewed spirit," ended Avati.

'Onecall Travel' Group General Manager, Marcel Lai, added to ABSW: "We're a new company based in Sydney that is heavily involved in wholesale and retail travel packages with a close association in Fiji.

"We have close ties with Sunflower-Airlines in Fiji and we are their representatives here in Australia."

Ms Belinda Paino, seen here as well as on page one is an ardent fan of the Tigers.

When the gorgeous Belinda — who is a busy graphic artist and an aerobics instructor — has time off she religiously follows the Tigers at Lambert Park.

ABSW hopes that all clubs will eventually have good news such as this, including the clubs in the Ericsson Cup.

We thought you'd like to see more of our front cover model, the charming Ms Belinda Paino, seen here modelling Leichhardt Tigers' new strip.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

3 .....Good Oil
4 .....Les Murray
5 .....Around the Clubs
6 .....Letters
7 .....Rising Stars
8 .....Match Reports
9 .....Results
10 .....Match Reports
11 .....Women's Writes
12 .....Team Scene
13 .....Team Scene
14 .....Victorian Pages
15 .....Victorian Pages
16 .....Soccer Canberra
17 .....NSW State Leagues
18 .....Around the Globe
19 .....Around the Globe
20 .....Weird & Wonderful
21 .....UK Stories
22 .....Italian/Greek
23 .....South American

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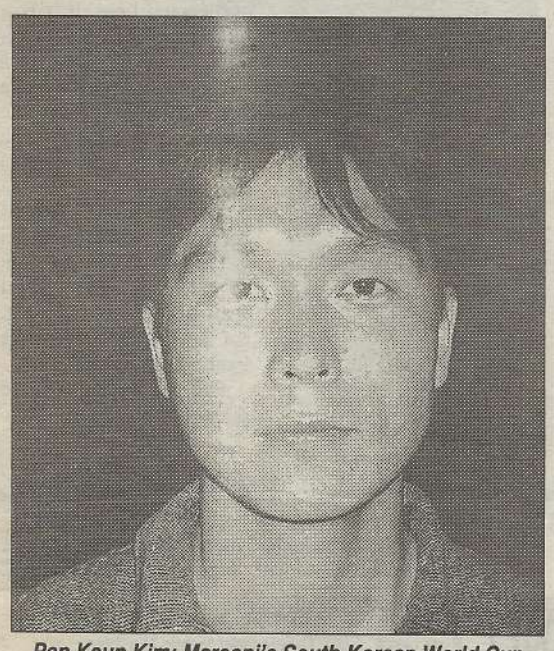
GOOD OIL GOOD OIL GOOD OIL GOOD OIL

By John Economos

MARCONI's South Korean World Cup star Pan Keun-Kim, who only last week signed to a new three-year contract, has easily been the Club's most outstanding signing of recent years.

Not only has Kim's quality mobile defending brought enormous stability to Marconi, but his visionary long passing has added another very much needed dimension to the team's needs.



Pan Keun Kim: Marconi's South Korean World Cup star.

The 33-year-old Kim played in the last two World Cup Finals for his country.

★ ★ ★

THE LEICHHARDT TIGERS coached by Peter Katholos in the NSW Super League and who only late last week signed a new major sponsor, has a massive airlift plannned for an end-of-season trip to Fiji.

The Tigers' new sponsor 'ONECALL TRAVEL' (see story page 2) has strong links with a Fijian domestic airline, 'Sunflower Airlines'.

The Tigers have planned to airlift at the end of the season their first, second and third grades, plus junior teams, to Fiji's Plantation Island.

★ ★ ★

Peter Katholos: Leichhardt Tigers' coach.

ZORAN MATIC, Marconi's master coach, was for a change, extremely pleased with his team after last Sunday night's white-washing of the Melbourne Knights at the Marconi Stadium.

However things looked pretty grim for Matic as late as last Thursday when eight of his Ericsson Cup squad members were struck down by flu.

★ ★ ★

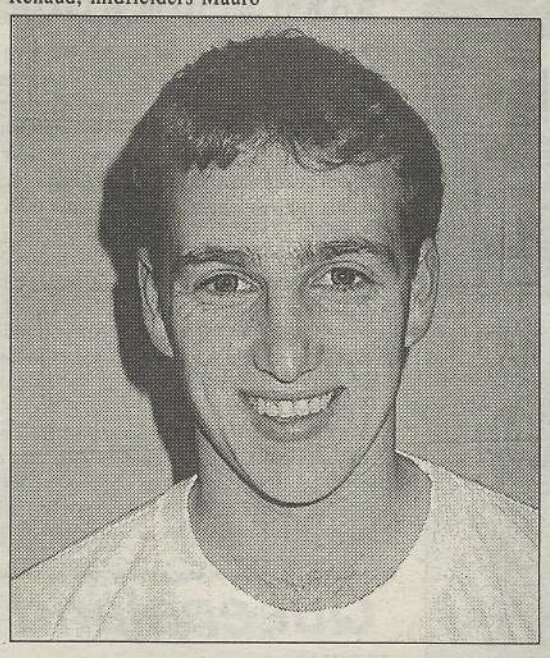
Zoran Matic: Seldom pleased, but last Sunday he was.

SOUTH MELBOURNE and ADELAIDE CITY must surely be rated highly to make this year's Grand Final.

Each having two of Australia's very best players, the highly skilled playmaker Paul Trimboli (Souths), and the elegant lateral defender Milan Ivanovic (Adelaide City) understandably give both clubs a flying start in the race for a spot in the Grand Final.

Unbelievably however, does anyone need reminding that BOTH were not used by national coach Terry Venables in the Melbourne debacle against Iran last November?

★ ★ ★



Paul Trimboli: Souths' ace goalscorer and 'think-tank'.

Milan Ivanovic: Adelaide City's superb sweeper.

MARCONI will again be making a special visit to the new Children's Hospital at Westmead this Thursday afternoon.

The visit, which was originally planned for last Thursday but was abruptly cancelled, had to be aborted when no less than eight of the Marconi players were suddenly struck down by a flu virus.

Left wingback Brendan Renaud, midfielders Mauro Van Cuylenberg and Vlado Zoric, centre back Dominic Longo and captain midfielder Brad Maloney will all be going out to Westmead Hospital on Thursday to pay a very welcome visit to the sick children bearing some Marconi gifts, (as usual), as a post-Easter gesture.

Marconi T-shirts, match tickets, stickers, Soccer balls and Soccer magazines will be handed out to the eagerly waiting children.

REFEREE EDDIE LENNIE, Australia's only representative at this year's World Cup Final, who will join another 33 referees to officiate at least one match each in France, can hardly wait to get to Paris.

Thirty-three linesmen or assistants have also been named and appointed for France 98.

Lennie looks a very happy man these days as our recent photo shows.

Our moustachioed whistler from Perth, who migrated from Scotland, must report to FIFA in Paris by June 4.

★ ★ ★

BRETT EMERTON on Good Friday gave his Olympic supporters an early Easter gift when he announced that he had signed a new two-year contract with his current club.

Brett, who recently was given the captaincy of the Australian Olympic team by coach Raul Blanco, was odds on that at the end of this season he would move to the League's fledgling club Northern Spirit, or, join a team in the England First Division.

Staying at Olympic was considered by almost no-one except Australia's blockbusting right midfielder.

★ ★ ★

JOHN KOSMINA's future as coach of the Newcastle Breakers could very soon come to an end.

Kosmina has just completed his three-year contract with the Breakers but rumours within the Club have it that he will be replaced for the 1998-99 season.

The former Australian World Cup skipper has done a marvellous job at Newcastle with very limited finances at his disposal.

Last season Kosmina finished with no less than eight draws. Eight more goals and he would have had 16 more League points, more than enough to lift Newcastle into the Top Six.

This season Newcastle finished with NINE draws. Same story again.

When questioned Kosmina informed 'Good Oil': "Of course I wouldlike to stay. It's been hard but we have been building and developing players.

"As you say this season we've had nine draws on top of the eight of last season. In all those draws we were troubled by no other team in the League so that must tell you something."

Never mind that every year Kosmina has lost players to other clubs seeking higher wages.

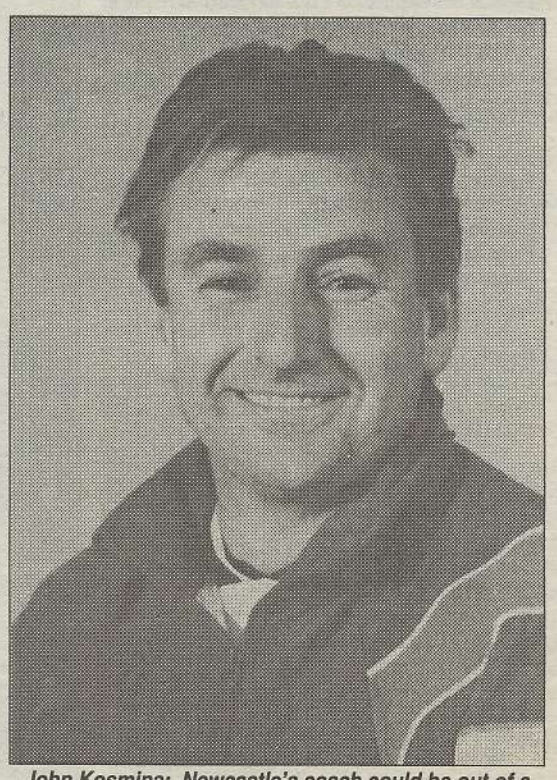
This season Scotty Thomas and the Halpin brothers have departed.

Now Newcastle's lanky and highly talented international Olympic striker Clayton Zane has already signed with Northern Spirit for next season.

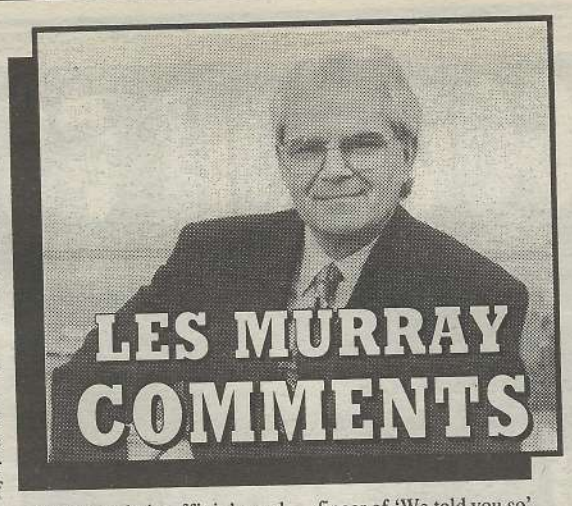
Coaching is a tough game, especially in Australia.

Eddie Lennie: A very happy whistler.

Brett Emerton: Stays with Olympic till the year 2000.



John Kosmina: Newcastle's coach could be out of a job?



From wherever you're standing, you are probably welcoming at least one sight in the Ericsson Cup top six: Wollongong Wolves. The Wolves are not, at least not yet, one of the league's powerhouse clubs. Clubs like Marconi, Adelaide City, Melbourne Knights and South Melbourne who, because of their incessant success, gather enemies around them. The only fans that enjoy a club's success are their own. Others despise them and yearn for their downfall.

Which, can I ask you, has been the most despised club in the history of the NSL? Sydney City, of course. And why? Mostly because fans of other clubs were jealous and tired of their consistent success in the late 70s and early 80s.

Apart from their own few hundred fans, for they were not a club with a large fan base, I cannot remember anyone having any affection for them.

You, like a bagful of fans around the world, might like Manchester United.

But let me assure you, as someone who has lived in England, there are millions of football fans in England who cannot stand the sight of them.

With less successful clubs, the ones who come along like a welcome intrusion into the standing orders, fans are more forgiving. Like Brisbane last season, and Carlton and the Wolves this season.

Of course it was not always so. Back in the 60s the genetic predecessors of the Wolves, a team called South Coast United, were among the most powerful in the land.

Representing a traditional soccer stronghold, with regular home crowds of eight, nine or ten thousand, they were always a feared bet for the championship.

Coached by a former Blackpool captain, Jimmy Kelly, they played a hard running, 'kick-and-rush' English style and were capable of steamrolling opponents into the dust. Nobody, except their own fans, liked them.

South Coast United, for reasons that were simply evolutionary, died sometime in the 70s. The city of Wollongong, so ideally set as a natural soccer centre because of its cultural and socio-economic composition, didn't emerge as a national league entity until the early 80s.

But they were not, let me tell you, all that impressive. The early Wollongong Wolves bore no resemblance to the ambitious, power hungry South Coast United of the early years. They postulated themselves as a small club, with small money and small ambitions.

Making those observations at the time, I was admonished often by their officials and supporters who, boorishly, thought I was biased against them. When they actually won the minor premiership in the late '80s they pointed the finger of 'We told you so'.

Trouble was they did it with an excruciatingly boring team, playing predictable, percentage football with not an ounce of glamour or class. The audience wasn't interested. Despite the results, they won no fans.

Their new era really began with the appointment of their current coach Nick Theodorakopoulos, only in his second season at the club. When Nick came, the Wolves were still not a big money club and their ambition matched it.

But Nick Theo (as he is known in inside soccer circles) had a healthy understanding of how such provincial, arrid fruit can be turned into wine.

An avid and broadminded watcher of football, for a while an active coach in the lower reaches of the State leagues, he had a fine knowledge of the cheap talent available.

Tony Perinich, one of his most celebrated discoveries and who is soon off to the super-ambitious Northern Spirit, came from the poorly Rockdale Illinden.

Similarly the perceptive Theodorakopoulos, who knew how to spot talent, cherry picked young national league players who were not given their chance but who had more deserving talent.

For instance Adam Brodbeck, first choice keeper for Australia in the World U/17 championships, is now a Wollongong player.

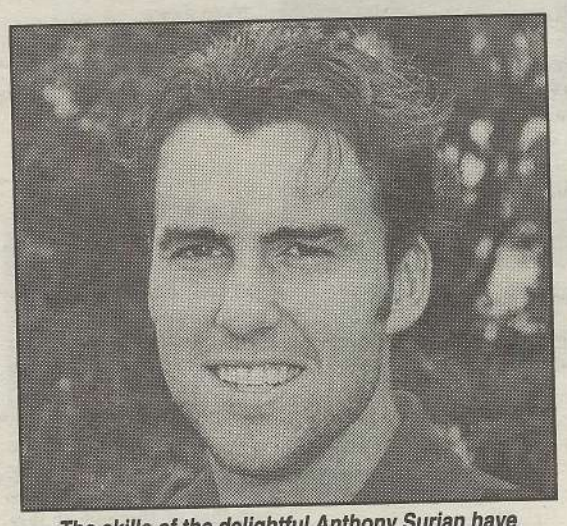
Secondly, Nick Theo is a believer in enterprising skilful, creative football. Suddenly Wollongong which never had this tradition, began to play eye catching stuff.

And they did so in the midst of winning matches. The crowds began to come. Now, Wollongong is one of the more healthily supported teams in the national league.

Lately officialdom harnessed the new era. Wollongong is now a franchised club, run along commercial lines. It is not totally a club of the future with ambitious plans for a super-stadium, and one of the most secure entities in the wobbling, insecure configuration that is our top competition.

And the top echelons of Soccer Australia, might I say had nothing to do with it. As always, it is the individual clubs who do the pioneering not those at the apex of the sport's administration.

The Wolves deserve success, let them roar.


The skills of the delightful Anthony Surjan have brought excitement back to Brandon Park.

Tony Perinich: One of Nick Theo's discoveries set for Northern Spirit

KOSMINA AND NEWCASTLE TO BREAK-UP?

By Dane Skafte

It now looks certain that Newcastle Breakers coach John Kosmina will be replaced for next year's Ericsson Cup. The former Socceroo captain has stepped on a few toes since arriving in the Newcastle region three years ago.

The outspoken coach looks certain to have coached his last game for Newcastle in the National Soccer League.

While Kosmina and the Board of Directors are tight-lipped about Kosmina's future it looks certain to be D-Day for the Newcastle coach.

One Newcastle identity definitely moving is Clayton Zane. The UTS Olympic game was his final game in a Breakers shirt, he will join new outfit Northern Spirit for the new season.

And in other news from the Northern New South Wales region ...former Newcastle KB United player and Newcastle Soccer legend David 'Jonah' Jones looks certain to have played his last First Division game.

The 42-year-old defender was set to play with NBN club Maitland Magpies but, during training recently, 'Jonah' was taken to hospital suffering a rare blood disorder.

"The doctors advised me to take it easy for a while and have plenty of rest. All I can do now is what and see what happens," Jonah added.

"I told David Lowe (Maitland's coach) that I couldn't play but I spoke with Bobby Namouv (Edgeworth's coach) and he asked me to be assistant coach, so I thought I might as well to keep involved in the game," he added.

All the staff at the ABSW wish 'Jonah' a quick recovery and hopefully see him on the paddock one day.

WA PREMIER DIVISION

By Richard Kreider

SEASON SET TO BE A CLOSE ONE

Fremantle City, Sorrento and the Western Knights are the only teams to attain maximum points from the first two rounds of the new Premier League season in the West. Last season's league runner-up Fremantle City, are the division's biggest scorers with ten goals, the first was a 5-2 hiding of Inglewood Falcons followed by a 5-0 whitewash of Kingsway Olympic.

The Knights, under new coach and former NSW star Ronnie Campbell, look equally impressive. Ray Marinovic and Eugene Singeorzan each scored a double in a 6-1 thrashing of title hopefuls Joondalup the previous week, while Marinovic, Alex Cummings and Tristram Morgan netted singles in last Saturday's 3-2 success over Stirling.

Cockburn City, a merger of Spearwood Dalmatinac and Cockburn United, have not enjoyed their new existence since they have lost both of their opening fixtures.

The first was a 3-0 loss to Sorrento who were inspired by a sensational showing from Todd Harnwell. The 18-year-old supplied the pass for the opening g to Trevor Morgan in the 36th minute, and then nette brace in the second-half. Sorrento then secured a win over Dianella last week, with a double to Mor and singles to former Melbourne Knights midfiel Ross Greer, Glen Thomas and Simon Hartland.

Defending champions Forest Athena scraped home 0 against Bayswater City Panthers, thanks to a seco half effort from Troy Bernard. After a 2-1 win o Kingsway in the first round, 1998 Night-Ser champions Perth were held to a scoreless draw v Joondalup last Saturday.

ROUND 1

Sorrento	3-0	Cockburn City
Joondalup City	1-6	Western Knights
Kingsway	1-2	Perth SC
Floreat Athena	2-2	Dianella W/Eagles
Bayswater	0-1	Stirling Macedonia
Fremantle City	5-2	Inglewood Falcons

ROUND 2

Stirling	2-3	Western Nights
Floreat Athena	1-0	Bayswater
Sorrento	5-1	Dianella E/Eagles
Inglewood	2-1	Cockburn City
Kingsway	0-5	Fremantle City
Perth SC	0-0	Joondalup City

Queensland Soccer Federatio

SP DIV 1S

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Toowoomba Utd	6	6	0	0	19	4	18
Rocklea Utd	6	4	1	1	19	9	13
Capalaba	6	4	0	2	16	9	12
Olympic Utd	6	3	1	2	15	13	10
Acacia Ridge	6	3	0	3	13	13	9
Souths Utd	6	1	3	2	9	9	6
Redlands Utd	6	2	0	4	12	18	6
Inala City	7	2	0	5	10	22	6
Slacks Creek	7	0	1	6	6	22	1

Round 7 Results

Inala City	2	South Utd	1
Capalaba	2	Redlands Utd	0
Acacia Ridge	3	Rocklea Utd	2
Toowoomba Utd	3	Slacks Creek	0
Olympic Utd		Bye	

SP DIV 1N

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Eastern Subs	7	6	1	0	16	5	19
Mitchelton	7	3	2	2	12	10	11
The Gap	6	2	3	1	12	11	9
Pine Rivers Utd	6	2	2	2	4	5	8
North Star	6	2	1	3	9	9	7
Uni of Qld	6	2	1	3	8	10	7
Newmarket	6	1	3	2	8	10	6
Albany Creek	6	1	2	3	5	8	
Grange Thistle	6	1	1	4	5	11	

Round 7 Results

Newmarket		Bye	
Albany Creek	1	Eastern Subs	
North Star	1	The Gap	
Uni of Qld	3	Grange Thistle	
Mitchelton	0	Pine Rivers Utd	

XXXX LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A
Brisbane City	7	7	0	0	23	2
Brisbane Lions	7	5	0	2	16	0
Rochedale Rov	7	4	0	3	13	12
Taringa Rovers	7	3	2	2	13	10
Gold Coast	7	3	1	3	8	10
Ipsw Knights	7	3	0	4	11	21
Mt Gravatt	7	2	2	3	12	6
Wynnum	7	2	1	4	8	13
B'Berg Waves	7	2	0	5	9	15
Beenleigh	7	1	0	6	11	26

Round 7 Results

Rochedale Rov	3	Wynnum
Mt Gravatt	4	Beenleigh
Ipsw Knights	3	B'Berg Waves
Brisbane City	2	Gold Coast
Taringa Rovers	3	Brisbane Lions

AROUND THE CLUBS

ILLAWARRA INSIGHT

By Phil Murphy

Wollongong Wolves plan to develop Brandon Park into a Super-Stadium.

Wolves directors have successfully bid to buy a 140-metre long grandstand from Seagulls Stadium on the Gold Coast.

It contains seating for more than 3000 people in addition to 20 corporate boxes and a bar area.

The package also includes extra lighting and an electronic scoreboard.

Wolves chairman Doug Symes told ABSW the total value is at least $4 million but his club would pay a lot less.

Symes said a deposit had been paid and now the Wolves would seek state and federal government assistance towards the cost.

He also said they would also try to gain assistance from Wollongong City Council and the Wollongong sporting community.

"This is a great opportunity to develop Brandon Park into a top-class stadium," Symes said.

"We have received strong support from Soccer Australia and people I have spoken to in Wollongong are right behind the concept.

"The cost we are looking at isn't a lot of money and the consortium to have taken over the club have expertise, equipment such as cranes and labor to help with the project."

Symes said the Wolves board had met with Wollongong Sportsground Trust, who control Brandon Park and WIN Stadium.

"We have received a positive reaction from the trust. During the talks we discussed the possibility of taking over Brandon Park on a long lease. We are hoping for at least 10 years with a 10-year option," Symes claimed.

The trust is currently running Brandon Park at a loss.

Trust chairman Bill Barnetson revealed recently that any profits from the markets which operate adjacent to WIN Stadium go towards the upkeep of Brandon Park.

The Seagulls Stadium stand would be dismantled, transported to Wollongong by a fleet of trucks and put back together on the eastern side of Brandon Park.

Apart from becoming a top soccer venue, the new-look ground would be used for other events.

Symes said it would be able to host other sporting and cultural events.

"Brandon Park is perfectly placed to aid tourism in Wollongong. There is a railway station close by in addition to plenty of accommodation and we can't forget the beaches. I believe it would be a magnificent addition to our tourism set-up."

If the project goes ahead, Brandon Park would become one of the top stadiums in Wollongong. There would be seating for about 7,000 people and the ground would be able to host international games.

Wollongong failed to gain any games from the Sydney Olympics because Brandon Park and WIN Stadium weren't considered suitable.

VIC VOICE

By Dwyght Tuffnell

GRAND FINAL FOR MCG?

South Melbourne are pushing for the Ericsson Cup Grand Final to be played at the MCG, should Melbourne win the right to host it.

"George Vasilopoulos (South Melbourne president) is currently having talks with Soccer Australia and the Melbourne Major Events company about the possibility of having the Grand Final held at the MCG," said South Melbourne vice-president Jim Karakoussis.

Should Melbourne get the Grand Final, South would be keen to have it at the MCG, with the bigger capacity a factor in their thinking.

But Carlton chairman Jack Reilly says that if Melbourne were to host the game, it should be played at Olympic Park.

"I believe that the home of soccer in Victoria is Olympic Park. It's a facility to be very proud of."

Olympic Park has been given a facelift recently for the arrival of NRL club Melbourne Storm.

Reilly says that moves to play the Grand Final at the MCG and get a big crowd are a long way away.

"If we played the final at the MCG in five years time in front of 90,000 people, then we'd have done our job.

"But I think we'd be biting off more than we could chew playing it at the MCG now."

CARLTON

Coach Eddie Krncevic is tipping star midfielder Kresimir Marusic to have a big finals series.

He has battled all season at Carlton with groin problems but now is coming into form at the right time.

"He's been playing well for the last few games, back to the Marusic that we know" Krncevic remarked.

"He's motivated now that we are in the top six and he'll be fired up for the finals, he's a great asset."

But finals time will be the last time Carlton fans will get to see Marusic in their colours.

Krncevic said that Marusic was definitely leaving for Northern Spirit at the end of the season.

"He's had his mind set on going to Northern Spirit and I don't want to hold anyone at the club who doesn't want to be here.

"It's just a matter of him wanting to return to Sydney, it's not that he doesn't like Carlton, he's been treated like a God here."

SOUTH MELBOURNE

South Melbourne and Socceroo defender Fausto De Amicis gave a pretty clear indication that he won't be going anywhere when his contract ends after this Ericsson Cup season.

De Amicis has attracted interest from, amongst others, Northern Spirit and Carlton.

"At the moment I'm not really thinking about it. I'm very, very happy at South Melbourne, it's a great camp," De Amicis remarked.

"Ever since I moved here, South have opened up many doors for me, such as playing for the Socceroos and sponsorship.

"I think I'd find it very hard moving, but at the same time all I'm concentrating on at the moment is winning the championship with South Melbourne."

VIC PREMIER LEAGUE

Two more coaches have lost their jobs in the Victorian Premier League this week.

South Dandenong's Paul Truman has been replaced by club stalwart Fadil Muriqi, who takes over in player-coach capacity.

And last Thursday, Bulleen Inter Kings announced that the club and coach Bogdan Bonk had 'mutually agreed to separate in the best interest of the club.'

Bonk, who took the Kings to last year's Grand Final, will be replaced by former Heidelberg and Altona coach Gary Cole.

Western Australia Results

Round Two
Premier Division

Stirling Macedonia	2	Western Knights	3
Floreat Athena	1	Bayswater City Panthers	0
Sorrento	5	Dianella White Eagles	1
Inglewood Falcons	2	Cockburn City	1
Kingsway Olympic	0	Fremantle City	5
Perth	0	Joondalup City	0

Round Two
Division One

Swan IC	4	Queens Park	0
Bassendean Caledonians	1	Ashfield/Bunbury	2
Stirling Suns	2	Wanneroo City	1
Perth C/Leeming Stks	0	Balcatta	1
Rockingham City	3	Southside Utd	0
Armadale	2	Nth Lake Espanol	3

South Australia Results

State League

Para Hills Knights	3	Port Pirie City	2
West Adelaide	2	Enfield City	2
Modbury	6	Adelaide Hills	1
Salisbury United	2	Seaford	1
Adelaide City	0	Noarlunga United	2
Adelaide Cobras	0	Western Strikers	0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Modbury	4	3	1	0	12	5	10
Para Hills	4	3	0	1	13	9	9
Seaford	4	3	0	1	11	8	9
West Adelaide	4	2	2	0	11	7	8
Adelaide Cobras	4	2	1	1	10	6	7
Enfield City	4	2	1	1	9	6	7
Adelaide City	4	2	0	2	10	7	6
Western Strikers	4	0	3	1	4	6	3
Noarlunga Utd	4	1	0	3	5	9	3
Adelaide Hills	4	1	0	3	5	14	3
Salisbury Utd	4	1	0	3	5	14	3
Port Pirie City	4	0	0	4	8	14	0

Under 23

Salisbury	4	Seaford	3
Adelaide Cobras	2	Western Strikers	1
Para Hills	0	Port Pirie	2
Modbury	5	Adelaide Hills	0

**Noarlunga and Enfield City byes.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Enfield City	3	2	1	0	4	1	7
Modbury	4	2	0	2	9	4	6
Noarlunga	2	2	0	0	4	1	6
Ad Cobras	4	2	0	2	8	8	6
Seaford	3	1	1	1	11	9	4
Port Pirie	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
Para Hills	4	1	1	2	7	8	4
Salisbury	3	1	1	1	6	9	4
West Str	3	1	0	2	5	7	3
Ad Hills	3	0	1	2	2	9	1

AUSSIE SOCCER DISCUSSION GROUP

A review by Stuart Jones

As part of ABSW's computer update, I logged onto the chat group on the game and discovered a great part, largely unknown, of Australian Soccer.

Basically the group discusses issues pertinent to the sport in Australia, as well as some 'off-the-wall' stuff.

There are a wide variety of contributions about all subjects (you can even start your own topic of discussion).

Some people in the group seem to come from out of left field while others have some very valuable ideas on the game.

Players, coaches, and administrators are all part of the group, although it seems mainly to give the fans' viewpoint.

If you want to keep up with the latest rumours, they appear to emanate from this discussion group, so log in and have a look.

Plus, all the latest results and game reports are emailed straight to you in a very timely manner.

Over the last few weeks, discussion has ranged from the media conspiracy against Soccer, to South Melbourne possibly holding the Grand Final at the MCG to the latest from North Sydney Oval.

The best part about it though is it projects the voice of the fan, something that is really missing in Australian football. It has been going for several years now and looks to be well established.

However, be warned! Discussion is quite lively and there will be a fair few emails to sift through.

You'll soon meet stars like Julian, Bonnie, Fred, Greg, and Edmundo to name but a few.

Plus there are pointers to sites on the web related to Aussie football (like the Breakers' fantastic site).

If you want to speak your mind on Aussie football — outside of ABSW — this is your opportunity.

To log in, email:
majordomo@thehub.com.au

and put 'subscribe ozsoccer-1' in the body and leave nothing in subject field of the email.

Hopefully over the next few weeks ABSW will be reviewing some of the Aussie Soccer sites on the web.

If you get a chance in the interim, go to:

Ozsoccer:http://bix.thehub.com.au/ozsoccer/welcome.html

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DAVID HILL MAN OF STEEL

Dear Sir,

What I am about to say will be short and to the point, with no inference to anybody.

With my experience in life, I have increasingly noticed that an ancient Greek proverb, which translated in English is: 'There is nothing bad that has not some good in it and there is nothing good that has not some bad in it', is very true to life. Unfortunately, in the case of David Hill the latter of the two is taking place.

Since he became chairman of SA, soccer in our country has attained unprecedented heights in prestige and popularity. Sadly though, by achieving that, David Hill dug his own grave because the chairmanship of SA has become now a very coveted position.

I think he needs now, apart from his managerial excellence, nerves of steel in order to endure the multitude of criticism, mostly inaccurate and unjust, directed against him.

I, and I am sure all those who want to see soccer progress even further in Australia, wish health, tenacity and patience to David Hill in his so difficult task from many points of view.

S. Sassinis
Nth Carlton, Vic.

Editor's note:

We will always endeavour to present a well balanced view of readers' thoughts and, sad to say, the anti-Hill bandwagon appears to be gathering momentum. I enjoy your comment about Mr Hill doing his job 'too well' and turning a once stigma ridden office into a desirable property and, make no bones about it, that is what it has become.

The kudos now involved with the job is enormous but not all of that effort can be directed at the present incumbent.

Fact is, the chairmanship is only as good as the game, and the game hasn't suffered too greatly in recent times, especially on the international front. However, I wonder if others have even considered that Mr Hill has done too well and is why others now covet his ass?

PERCEPTIVE HEADLINE

Dear Sir,

Your very perceptive headline 'The Battle For Control' over the 'unanimous' decision letter of the NSW and Victorian Soccer Federations urging David Hill to resign from office, does raise an interesting question

Are all those political voters really scared that Mr Hill may one day achieve one unified body to control football (soccer) in Australia, without the need for the splinter groups wielding their power within the often out-dated colonial boundaries, set way back in history?

As for sponsors deserting in droves, if a non-Labor (sic) government was involved in negotiations, fair go, but you forget that it was a LABOR government that set all sports in Australia on a totally new footing, which is paying handsome dividends today through the various institutions.

The tone of the Federations' letter implies that any organisation aligned to, or sympathetic with, the ALP is tainted in some way, so logically, the reverse would be apply if such organisations were aligned with, or sympathetic to, the Liberal Party.

Maybe they should examine what politics were involved in the aftermath of Australia's qualification for the 1974 World Cup, and why our greatest opportunity for soccer was squandered.

As for David Hill, give him a go.

We have progressed up the world rankings since he arrived on the scene and this is a refreshing change from the stagnation of the previous 23 years of Australian soccer on the international front. And that is what really counts, surely!

George Green,
Alstonville, NSW.

Editor's note:

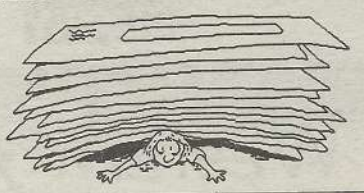
If it shows one thing it must be that professional football cannot be too far away when so much political jockeying for position rears its extremely ugly head. It was never the Federations' intention that the letter be made public and one must ask as to why it was.

Mr Hill

That said, if people have a desire to become politicians, move to bloody Canberra and annoy the hell out of them down there, in the correct environment and setting, otherwise, stay the hell away from our sport. There is more to this than meets the eye, a hidden agenda perhaps, and our code has been used as a convenient vehicle with which to give prominence to it. When all is said and done, the game will be around for far longer than any of us but, sad to say, it's the times we live in that matter. I do not pass judgement on the protagonists here, I'll leave that our readers. Soccer supporters are voters but currying favour through a sport is a dangerous

Letters to the Editor

Have your say on any soccer issue in the world. Preference will be given to short letters. Include daytime phone number for verification.



Short letters of about 400 words will be given preference in this column.

The opinions expressed on this page do not necessarily reflect those of this newspaper

Now you can also send your letters to ABSW's email address at:

soccer@foreignlanguage.com.au
We encourage you to use this service.

STATE-BASED NSL

Dear Sir,

After a disappointing season as far as crowd attendances go, everyone agrees that a complete overhaul of the domestic competition is needed. With an expected 25% increase in crowds this season (according to David Hill), not eventuating, drastic decisions need to be made.

My suggestion would be, if the Northern Spirit doesn't attract big crowds next season (and I have my doubts playing on a cricket ground at North Sydney Oval), just like Carlton this season have not, Soccer Australia should look at playing a state based national competition, along the lines of Rugby's Super Twelve.

Soccer will never knock off both Aussie Rules and Rugby League's popularity at club level for many decades to come, because the culture of the public is steeped in history and tradition with those codes, clubs and football over the past century.

Therefore we should follow Rugby Union's example and form a Super Twelve Competition on a state and territory based level with the Kiwis.

The only reason Perth Glory has been a huge success (apart from being a multi-cultural club), is because it also represents WA and not just Perth.

I am sure that many of the fans attending their matches are not just Perth residents, but from all over the south-west of the state. When the fans barrack for their team, they don't mention Perth, but yell out "Glory".

A 'Super Twelve', backed heavily by the media, with no ethnic ties to a single nationality, and at least two games on free-to-air, television each weekend, would consist of two NSW teams (one representing Northern NSW) two Victorian teams (one East Victoria, and one the West with the Hume Highway the dividing line including Melbourne).

Two Qld teams (one from North Qld) should also be included.

Two New Zealand teams (one north and one south Island, to break up their national team). One ACT team, one from SA and WA.

The last position should go to the Northern Territory, if feasible, otherwise to a third NSW side called South NSW (representing Wollongong to Eden and West to Wagga Wagga and the Riverina).

The best way to get support for these state and Territory sides (apart from usual things), is to take the games to the people, wherever possible.

For instance, North NSW may have its headquarter in Newcastle, but it also plays some home games in Lismore, Taree, Coffs Harbour and other towns with a ground big enough.

South NSW would do the same. Based in Wollongong it should play some home games in Wagga Wagga, Bega, Nowra, Griffith (plenty of Italians there), West Victoria, Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo and elsewhere.

With at least 33 rounds of games played, at least 7 or 8 should be played in the big country towns every season. If it's only 22 rounds then at least 4 or 5 games should be played in the major towns outside of the main headquarters (big cities usually).

If it's to be a state based competition, it has to take some games around the states smaller cities and towns to get maximum interest and support, which would flow onto TV ratings as well.

I reckon if my concept was looked at, it would be a winner for sure, provided it had the necessary back-up, such as marketing, advertising, promotional opportunities, and of course professional players as well.

First we will just have to wait and see if Northern Spirit is a winner next season.

Anything less than a 10,000 home average from them is not a huge success, and anything less than 5,000 will be a failure.

Dominic Scullino,
Nerang, Qld.

Editor's note:

Do you ever read what you write? In one sentence you say there would 'no ethnic ties' with this idea and in the next mention 'plenty of Italians there'!

Lastly, why would the so called 'mainstream media' give a damn, let alone coverage, if there are 12 teams or fifty?

Let's face it, they are not interested in soccer, no matter how well you dress it up or by what you call it.

The only way forward for the game is by people attending matches and all the areas that are associated with it.

This will only happen when the game is advertised in the correct manner and, one day perhaps, we'll tell the reason as to why ABSW has been unable to bring you the venues, dates and times of matches this season.

The ball lies fairly and squarely with the clubs and the governing body, be they national or state league teams.

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GIVE YOUTH A CHANCE

Dear Sir,

In previous letters to ABSW, I've written about some of Soccer Australia's questionable policies. The lack of direction from SA hampered the Optus Series, because too many veterans were chosen in the squad.

The Olyroo Challenge has shown that our youngsters are potentially better players than our 'older brigade'.

Of course we need a couple of experienced players to show them the ropes, but most of us agree that we were top heavy with players lacking pace and technique as well as attacking fair (we only scored one goal in three games). The Olyroos have those ingredients, so more should be given a chance at senior level.

SA have also announced that they will not be seeking a national coach as yet.

They should be seeking possible replacements immediately, despite our lack of matches. We should go for a Brazilian, not a local, due to their lack of experience. A Brazilian would be best equipped to take our football to the next level (due to their worldwide success), while the young coaches could learn from the master.

SA have indicated that the Ericsson Cup will be comprised of 15 teams next season, which is absolutely astounding. It is no secret that SA have wanted to axe a few clubs in recent seasons, and now that they have a perfect chance, they decide not to.

To be fair, some clubs, such as Sydney United, would take SA to court if they axed them, and there are a number of clubs in a very ordinary state, so there is not one club to be singled out.

It appears they are giving all clubs until the year 2000 to sort themselves out, while increasing the stakes as far as the terms of inclusion are concerned.

There might only be two or three clubs left! It will also be regionally based, so the clubs from Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide need to get their acts together, with guidance and planning from SA.

This revamping of the league in 2000 is fine, but where does that leave the Ericsson Cup for the next two years? In a sorry state, unless more clubs show initiative.

One of the Melbourne dailies recently printed an article about the possibility of a commercial network securing the rights for local soccer. All networks are interested in

Raul Blanco

Socceroo matches, but is was reported that Channel 9 may be interested in the Ericsson Cup.

However, it would be VERY surprising if they did televise any national league games with the current competition of the league because there are probably only 5 or 6 teams good enough. There are simply too many teams in the competition.

Finally, I wrote a letter a few weeks ago about Japan's team. When I mentioned that the Japanese players are 'not particularly talented', I meant that, collectively, they are not more talented than Australian players.

Don't get me wrong, I think they are excellent players. All I was saying was that if SA were as professional as those in charge of Japanese or even American soccer, we would also be playing in France.

G. Owe
Geelong, Vi

Editor's note:

'Inference' and 'expression' may well be the problem when tackling the 'not good enough' question, but agree that it may well now be the time to give a South American coach the opportunity to show his stuff.

The truth is, Raul Blanco did an excellent job with the Olyroos and didn't receive the congratulations he duly received. I, for one would dearly love to see the aforementioned South American in charge, although he is Australian through and through, and would add that I sincerely hope Mr Blanco is the one chosen and given the opportunity to show what he can do.

Remember, age has nothing at all to do with football if you good enough, you young/old enough to be involved and wisdom cannot be bought. Give Raul a go.

Rising Stars

Southern Division

Heavy rain in Melbourne forced the postponement of the Round 26 match between **South Melbourne** and **Carlton** at Bob Jane Stadium to save the pitch for the senior game in the Ericsson Cup. This leaves the Qualifying Final unchanged since Melbourne Knights was drawn to play Carlton no matter what the outcome of the Blues' final game. Nevertheless the Round 26 match will probably be played on Wednesday.

The **Victorian Institute of Sport** gained the last play-off berth in the Southern Division with a single goal victory over **Heidelberg United** at Olympic Village on Saturday. Steve Laurie got the only goal with a fierce volley, the strike coming with only eight minutes left to play. The VIS will meet Gippsland Falcons in the Elimination Final.

Falcons ran up ten goals to one against **South Melbourne Rockets** in the Latrobe Valley on Sunday night. Rockets had only nine players and it was one-way traffic with three goals by Luke Cheney, and doubles by Paul Byrne, John McEvoy and Andrew Halikias and a single by Anthony Pardo for the Falcons. Phillip Klathas got the consolation goal for the Rockets.

Northern Division

The weather played havoc with the final round of home-and-away matches in Sydney with the **UTS Olympic Colts** v **Marconi Fairfield Colts** match scheduled for Saturday being postponed. The same was true of the **Marconi Fairfield** v **Sydney United Colts** match. The match between NSWIS and the AIS probably also succumbed. Outstanding games are likely to be rescheduled for Wednesday.

In a thriller, **Sydney United** just grabbed the last play-off spot with a three-two win over **Wollongong Wolves.** It was one-all at the interval and looked like going all the way to the wire. Paul Reid opened up for Wollongong in 25 minutes, but within a couple of minutes Joe Barilla equalised for United. Seven minutes into the second-half, Paul Mirosevic put Sydney United in front and then Robert Angievski made it three and seemed to have the game sewn up for United in 64 minutes. But the Wolves would not give up and when Ray Younis scored after 80 minutes the last ten were not for the faint-hearted as Wollongong threw everything at United, which somehow held out. Now the two teams have to do it all again next week in the Elimination Final and at this stage it would be very hard to pick a winner.

It was equally close at Belmore as **UTS Olympic** squeaked home by three goals to two against **Newcastle Breakers.** Peter Juchniewicz scored first for the Breakers in 13 minutes and Ali Jomaa got Olympic on terms after four more minutes. Then Tayfun Devrimol gave Olympic the lead on 25 and there was no further scoring till the 70th minute, when Jomaa grabbed his second. Tony Bauer pulled a goal back for the Breakers in 87 to set up a furious last minute onslaught which Olympic managed to weather.

Commiserations to Gary Phillips and the lads from the Queensland Academy who just missed out by a point from qualifying for the play-offs in the Northern Division.

Southern Division

Heidelberg United	0	**VIS** Laurie	1
Gippsland Falcons Cheney 3, Byrne 2, McEvoy 2, Halikias 2, Pardo	10	**Sth Melb Rockets** Klathas	1
South Melbourne (Match postponed)	P	**Carlton**	P

Altona Magic v Albury Wodonga (Already played)
Bulleen Inter v Melbourne Knights (Already played)
Bentleigh Greens v Bye

Northern Division

UTS Olympic Colts (Match postponed)	P	**Marconi Fairfield Colts**	P
UTS Olympic Jomaa 2, Devrimol	3	**Newcastle Breakers** Juchniewicz, Bauer	2
Marconi Fairfield	P	**Sydney United Colts**	P
Wollongong City Reid, Younis	2	**Sydney United** Mirosevic, Barilla, Angievski	3

Bye v QAS
ACTAS v Bye

By Roy Hay

Southern Division

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Melb Knights	20	18	0	2	85	24	54
Carlton	19	17	0	2	55	11	51
Gippsland	20	14	2	4	55	27	44
VIS	20	10	4	6	45	23	34
Bulleen	20	10	3	7	35	28	33
Bentleigh	20	8	2	10	29	37	26
Heidelberg	20	7	2	10	29	53	23
Sth Melb	19	5	3	11	37	34	18
Albury	20	5	1	14	28	46	16
Altona	20	4	2	14	31	73	14
SM Rockets	20	1	1	18	16	89	4

Northern Division

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
AIS	21	15	2	4	74	21	47
Olympic	22	14	4	4	71	33	46
Syd Utd	22	11	6	5	60	40	39
Wollongong	22	11	5	6	47	41	38
QAS	22	11	4	7	51	30	37
Newcastle	22	9	6	7	50	39	33
Marconi	21	9	2	10	40	46	29
Marconi Colts	21	7	4	10	35	50	25
ACTAS	22	5	7	10	25	56	22
NSWIS	21	4	5	12	31	51	17
Syd Utd Colts	21	4	3	14	24	63	15
Olympic Colts	21	3	4	14	30	68	13

Leading Goalscorers

Southern Division

Adis Kablar	Melbourne Knights	6
John Kalabric	Melbourne Knights	15
Jovanco Novacevski	Carlton	14
Luke Cheney	Gippsland Falcons	13
Zoran Petrevski	VIS	12

Northern Division

Mile Sterjovski	AIS/Sydney United	25
Mark Hagger	Marconi Fairfield Colts	22
Joe Bruni	Marconi Fairfield	14
Azur Mujanovic	Sydney United	11
Michael Ferrante	AIS	10
Chris Tanchevski	Newcastle Breakers/AIS	10
Jim Bakis	UTS Olympic	9
Nick Carle	UTS Olympic	9

Please note, goalscorers as given in revised tables this week are supplied by Soccer Australia from official referees' team sheets, and not as given to our reporter directly by club liaison officers.

PLAY-OFFS

DATES AND VENUES TO BE ARRANGED
Matches will be played as curtain raisers to Ericsson Cup games where possible

SOUTHERN DIVISION

QUALIFYING FINAL

Melbourne Knights v Carlton
(Winner direct to Southern Division Grand Final, loser to play winner of Elimination Final)

ELIMINATION FINAL

Gippsland Falcons v VIS
(Loser eliminated, winner plays loser of Qualifying final)

NORTHERN DIVISION

QUALIFYING FINAL

AIS v UTS Olympic
(Winner direct to Northern Division Grand Final, loser to play winner of Elimination Final)

ELIMINATION FINAL

Sydney United v Wollongong City
(Loser eliminated, winner plays loser of Qualifying final)

NSW SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE RD 5

	G/13	G/14	G/15	G/16
Manly War v Blacktown City	1-0	0-1	0-3	1-1
Marconi Fair v Eastern Subs	0-3	1-0	2-0	1-1
Sutherland v Newcastle Bre	2-4	6-1	2-1	2-1
Wollongong C v Sydney Oly	1-3	0-2	1-6	1-2
Parramatta E v Sydney Utd	1-3	0-0	2-1	6-1
Macarthur R v Southern D	2-4	1-2	1-3	0-0
G/ville Hornsby v Leichhardt	1-0	4-1	3-3	2-0
Blacktown City v Sydney Oly	P	P	P	P
Marconi F'field v Manly War	P	P	P	P
Sutherland Asn v East Subs	P	P	P	P
W'gong City v P'matta E	2-2	4-0	1-2	3-2
Sydney Utd v Southern Dist	P	P	P	P
Macarthur R v Gladesville H	P	P	P	P
N'castle Breakers v L'hardt T	1-4	2-3	3-2	4-0

GRADE 13

	P	W	D	L	F	A	DIF	PTS
Newcastle Breakers	6	4	1	1	15	9	6	13
Sydney Olympic	4	4	0	0	17	4	13	12
Eastern Suburbs	4	3	0	1	10	3	7	9
Sutherland Association	4	3	0	1	9	5	4	9
Manly Warringah	4	3	0	1	5	8	-3	9
Parramatta Eagles	5	2	2	1	8	7	1	8
Southern Districts	5	2	1	2	11	11	0	7
Gladesville Hornsby	4	2	0	2	4	4	0	6
Macarthur Rams	4	1	1	2	12	10	2	4
Wollongong City	5	1	1	3	6	7	-1	4
Leichhardt Tigers	5	1	0	4	8	12	-4	3
Blacktown City	4	1	0	3	3	7	-4	3
Sydney United	4	1	0	3	4	13	-9	3
Marconi Fairfield	4	0	0	4	3	15	-12	0

GRADE 14

	P	W	D	L	F	A	DIF	PTS
Southern Districts	5	4	1	0	16	5	11	13
Sydney Olympic	4	4	0	0	11	1	10	12
Blacktown City	4	5	0	0	9	1	8	12
Wollongong City	5	3	1	1	10	3	7	10
Gladesville Hornsby	4	2	1	1	9	7	2	7
Sydney United	4	2	1	1	7	6	1	7
Sutherland Association	4	2	0	2	11	5	6	6
Leichhardt Tigers	5	1	2	2	7	11	-4	5
Macarthur Rams	4	1	1	2	4	3	1	4
Newcastle Breakers	6	1	1	4	5	17	-12	4
Marconi Fairfield	4	1	0	3	1	6	-5	3
Parramatta Eagles	5	0	2	3	0	9	-9	2
Eastern Suburbs	4	0	1	3	2	10	-8	1
Manly Warringah	4	0	1	3	0	8	-8	1

GRADE 15

	P	W	D	L	F	A	DIF	PTS
Parramatta Eagles	5	4	0	1	13	8	5	12
Gladesville Hornsby	4	3	1	0	10	3	7	10
Sydney Olympic	4	3	0	1	18	9	9	9
Marconi Fairfield	4	3	0	1	9	4	5	9
Blacktown City	4	3	0	1	7	5	2	9
Newcastle Breakers	6	3	0	3	11	14	-3	9
Sydney United	4	2	1	1	8	5	3	7
Sutherland Association	4	2	0	2	9	6	3	6
Southern Districts	5	2	0	3	9	13	-4	6
Leichhardt Tigers	5	1	1	3	17	16	1	4
Manly Warringah	4	1	1	2	4	6	-2	4
Eastern Suburbs	4	1	0	3	5	9	-4	3
Wollongong City	5	1	0	4	5	16	-11	3
Macarthur Rams	4	0	0	4	6	17	-11	0

GRADE 16

	P	W	D	L	F	A	DIF	PTS
Parramatta Eagles	5	4	0	1	16	7	9	12
Gladesville Hornsby	4	3	0	1	5	2	3	9
Newcastle Brakers	6	3	0	3	11	9	2	9
Marconi Fairfield	4	2	1	1	8	5	3	7
Sydney Olympic	4	2	1	1	5	4	1	7
Sutherland Association	4	2	1	1	5	6	-1	7
Sydney United	4	2	0	2	6	9	-3	6
Wollongong City	5	1	2	2	5	6	-1	5
Southern Districts	5	1	2	2	4	5	-1	5
Manly Warringah	4	1	2	1	3	4	-1	5
Eastern Suburbs	4	1	1	2	4	5	-1	4
Blacktown City	4	1	1	2	3	4	-1	4
Leichhardt Tigers	5	1	1	3	6	13	-7	4
Macarthur Rams	4	0	2	2	1	3	-2	2

ERICSSON CUP

Match Reports

MARUSIC PLOTS SOUTH DEMOLITION

SOUTH MELBOURNE.....0 CARLTON 5

By Dwyght Tuffnell

Melbourne will host the Ericsson Cup Grand Final after Carlton secured second spot with a 5-0 annihilation of minor premiers South Melbourne on Sunday.

South and Carlton will clash again in two weeks time, with South Melbourne electing to play away first, with the likely venue being Optus Oval.

The Blues will go into the two legs full of confidence after inflicting South Melbourne's biggest defeat since Perth Glory thrashed them 4-0 in Perth last season.

"At the start of the year, a lot of people in the soccer fraternity wrote Carlton off and today we deserve a lot of credit," said coach Eddie Krncevic after the game.

It is a remarkable achievement finishing in second spot in their inaugural season and the Blues did it in style with easily their best performance of the year.

A slippery ground didn't stop Carlton turning on the style, and holding South to just a couple of shots on goal.

Krncevic's charges started the rout in the 22nd with the league's form striker, Andy Vlahos, finding the net again.

Mark Bresciano's left foot shot could only be parried by Michael Petkovic and Vlahos was first on the scene to knock the ball into the roof of the net.

Just eight minutes later South gave away a penalty.

Vlahos played a through ball to John Markovski whose brilliant turn was checked by Tansel Baser. Big Jonesy himself slotted in the spot kick.

Vlahos had another good chance shortly after and then Markovski gave Carlton a convincing 3-0 lead.

After a foul on the outstanding Kresimir Marusic, Markovski curled a free-kick in typical brilliant fashion over the wall and into Petkovic's bottom corner.

Two minutes before half-time South came the closest they would to scoring a goal when Mark Atkinson headed Vaughan Coveny's header off the line.

Marusic capped off another 'Man-of-the-Match' performance with a stunning goal in the 62nd minute.

He received Markovski's pass before feigning a pass down the right and then shooting past a bewildered Petkovic.

Alex Josifovski and Con Anthopoulos both could have been on the scoresheet before Bresciano wrapped it up in some style.

The youngster weaved his way through South defenders in the area before unleashing an unstoppable left foot shot past the hapless Petkovic.

South coach Ange Postecoglou was disappointed with the way his troops finished the regular season off.

"It's put a dampener on the year, it's disappointing because we didn't finish off the season in style."

Despite South fielding a slightly weaker side, Krncevic said that it was still a tremendous win.

"Don't take anything away from South. They still put a good side out there today but our boys outplayed them."

The Carlton supremo also said that the win will give them a psychological advantage for the game in two weeks.

Asked how Postecoglou would pick up his players after that performance he said : "If the players and the club aren't hurt by that I don't know what it will take to pick them up."

Another masterful performance by Kresimir Marusic.

SOUTH: Petkovic, Orlic, Coveny, Trimboli (Clarkson 65), Damianos, Boutsianis (Panopoulos 46), Lozanovski, Baser, J. Anastasiadis (Curcija 65), Liparoti, Goutzioulis.

CARLTON: Anastasiadis, Douglas (Stergiopoulos 64), Anthopoulos, Marusic (Mirkovic 77), Vlahos (Josifovski 69), Colosimo, Markovski, D.Cervinski, Atkinson, Della Rocca, Bresciano.

SCORERS
Carlton: Vlahos 22, Markovski 30p, 38, Marusic 62, Bresciano 89

CROWD: 8,725 (approx)

POY
3 Marusic (C)
2 Markovski (C)
1 Bresciano (C)

TOME'S DOUBLE SAVES OLYMPIC

SYDNEY OLYMPIC .....2 NEWCASTLE BREAKERS 2

By John Economos

Newcastle Breakers, last Sunday night at Belmore, showed great defiance over their more illustrious opponents Sydney Olympic, who, although buckled under the visitors' pressure escaped with a 2-2 draw thanks largely to the lifesaving brace scored by Norman Tome.

The young Novocastrians threw themselves at Olympic and should have had the match wrapped up in the first session instead of going in at the break with just a 0-1 lead through a great Tollenaere goal.

He was alert in the 11th minute to meet a nice cutback from the left by wide midfielder Jason Bennett.

Just a minute earlier, ironically, the struggling Olympic should have taken the lead. Striker Norman Tome stole possession wide on the left and fired into the six-yard box a flat cross that missed everybody before it crashed onto the far post and harmlessly bounced out.

Newcastle's fluent and mobile 'gear-box' of Leo Langone, Matthew Lowe and Jason Bennett cut into Olympic who looked totally disjointed with their wide men failing to penetrate.

Tome's 26th minute free-kick from 35-metres out screamed narrowly past the frame in a first-half which saw Olympic struggle to hold out Newcastle.

Two minutes before the break Bennett should have doubled Newcastle's lead following a scramble inside the Olympic box. But inexplicably Bennett ballooned his golden chance, a side-footed blast, well over the crossbar.

Five minutes after the break Olympic was awarded a free-kick on the left. Tome lifted a beautiful curling effort from 22-metres that sailed into the top left corner.

Just a minute earlier, stocky striker Derek Poimer crashed his way into Newcastle's box passing through three defenders but his left-footed rising rocket ricochetted off the left upright.

Newcastle, on the hour mark, regained their well-deserved lead through a powerful header from right midfielder Leo Langone, who raced into Olympic's box to head in a nice cross from Clayton Zane.

Six minutes from time Olympic got out of jail. Tome, timing his run perfectly, 'studded-in' a flat cross fired in from the right by Ardone to score from close range.

A very disappointed Newcastle coach John Kosmina, lamented: "We created enough chances within 20 minutes to win 20 games. We should have had them dead and buried by then, but they got a lucky deflection and when we didn't take our further chances we quickly got ourselves into trouble."

Olympic coach John Sentas stated: "We got away with it in the first-half as we had some problems in our midfield as Newcastle were a lot better. But I feel we were as good as them in the second even though we were not playing for anything really. We were deflated after last week's match (vs Knights).

"Since taking over Olympic we have won 14 League points from a possible 24," ended the unassuming Sentas.

Best for Breakers were Shane Pryce, right midfielder Leo Langone and left defender Glenn Sprod, whilst Olympic's best were Tome, whose excellent passing was also a feature, plus tough central marker Scott Baillie and stocky striker Poimer.

Shane Pryce: Man-of-the-Match performance.

OLYMPIC: Catlin: Willard, Baillie, Juric, Ciantar, Kalantzis (Augerinos 46) Taliadoros (L. Carle 46), Tsekenis, Ardone: Tome, Poimer.

BREAKERS: Swancott: Ritchie, McManus (West 46), (Wilson 88), Pryce, Bosnar, Sprod: Langone, Lowe, Bennett: Zane, Tollenaere (Umlil 64).

SCORERS
Olympic: Tome 50, 84
Breakers: Tollenaere 11, Langone 60

Crowd: 2,320

POY
3 Pryce (NB)
2 Tome (SO),
1 Langone (NB)

PUMAS DO AN 'IRAN' ON WOLVES

WOLLONGONG WOLVES .....2 SYDNEY UNITED 2

By Phil Murphy

Sydney United scored two goals in the last six minutes to earn a 2-2 draw with Wollongong Wolves at Brandon Park on Sunday night.

Wolves coach Nick Theodorakopoulos described it as Australia against Iran all over again! Further, United coach David Mitchell said the 2-2 scoreline didn't do justice to Wollongong.

The Wolves played some very good football and looked to be coasting into third place on the ladder when a calamatous series of events scuppered their hopes of a victory.

A former Wolf, Joe Vrkic, scored for United in the 84th minute and, a minute from the end, yet another former player at Brandon Park, Mile Sterjovski, grabbed an equaliser and Wollongong, with other results coming in from other grounds, had finished in sixth place.

Nevertheless, like that infamous night at the MCG, the home team should have had the three points and third place all wrapped up well before United scored their first goal.

The visitors were on the back foot time after time as the slick Wolves knocked the ball around stylishly.

It came as not surprise when flying wingback Alvin Ceccoli scored with a header after 19 minutes.

Following this, Kosta Salapasidis twice went fractionally close to increasing the Wollongong lead and Ceccoli had a lob from the edge of the box that beat goalkeeper Andrew Crews but passed just over the bar.

Abbas Saad had the only real scoring chance for United in the first-half, but Hughes was quickly off his line to deny the striker.

When Matt Horsley headed in number two for the Wolves in the 59th minute, after great lead-up work from Ceccoli and Anthony Surjan, it seemed all over for the Sydnesiders.

However a United side, which had looked very tame up front against the well-drilled Wolves defence, suddenly came to life in the last 12 minutes.

Hughes made two very good saves in this period but he was powerless to prevent Vrkic and Sterjovski scoring their goals.

Theodorakopoulos said if he had been given the chance to select a team to play against in the playoffs he didn't know which one he would prefer.

"Play-off football is about the best team on the day," he said.

"It seemed as though we would have played United again but now will be up against Adelaide City.

"In a play-off situation, I think if a team has been good enough to make the top six they will be hard to beat."

Fortunately the Wolves will have no injury worries or suspensions going into the playoffs.

Mitchell said Wollongong had played very well and they didn't receive justice.

"I would not have liked to come back there next week," he surmised.

"However, the way my side came back proves that Sydney United can never be written off."

There is a good chance the United coach will be in the squad for the play-off games against Marconi.

He has been out of action with a knee injury since the first round game against Wollongong.

For the first time, Wollongong will have both their teams involved in the end-of-season games, which shows the depth of talent there is at this ambitious club.

Mile Sterjovski

WOLVES: Hughes, Ceccoli, Stanton, Horsley, Surjan, Dimoski (Connolly 73), Chipperfield, Souris, Perinich, Sinozic, Salapasidis (Masi 88).

PUMAS: Crews, Barrett, Kupresak, Plesa, Vrkic, Munro (Culina 45), Bennett (Santalab 70), Hooker, Rudan, Saad (Jerman 62), Sterjovski.

SCORERS
Wolves: Ceccoli 19, Horsley 59
Pumas: Vrkic 84 Sterjovski 89

CROWD: 6,347

POY
3 Souris (WC)
2 Surjan (WC)
1 Plesa (SU)

ERICSSON CUP

Results Round Twenty-Six

Wollongong City	2	Sydney United	2	UTS Olympic	2	Newcastle Breakers	2
Marconi Fairfield	5	Melbourne Knights	0	South Melbourne	0	Carlton SC	5
Gippsland Falcons	1	Adelaide City	0	Adelaide Sharks	2	Brisbane Strikers	1

Canberra Cosmos v Perth Glory (played Monday)

Round Twenty-Seven Fixtures

Odds courtesy of SportOdds

2.00	Adelaide City	3.50	Wollongong City	3.50
2.25	Sydney United	3.25	Marconi Fairfield	2.75

TO WIN GRAND FINAL

South Melbourne 1.75
Carlton 8.00
Adelaide City 5.50
Sydney United 17.00
Marconi Fairfield 17.00
Wollongong City 17.00

ERICSSON CUP TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Melbourne	26	13	9	4	56	41	48
Carlton SC	26	12	9	5	44	24	45
Adelaide City	26	13	4	9	45	30	43
Sydney United	26	11	10	5	37	26	43
Marconi Fairfield	26	12	7	7	33	25	43
Wollongong City	26	13	3	10	51	33	42
Melbourne Knights	26	11	6	9	37	35	39
UTS Olympic	26	10	4	12	32	38	34
Adelaide Sharks	26	10	4	12	32	38	34
Gippsland Falcons	26	8	7	11	28	36	31
Brisbane Strikers	26	6	5	15	23	40	23
Newcastle Breakers	26	4	9	13	30	50	21
Canberra Cosmos	25	3	8	14	28	54	17

1998 WORLD CUP

Brazil	4.00
France	7.00
England	8.00
Germany	8.00
Holland	9.00
Italy	9.00
Argentina	13.00
Spain	16.00
Yugoslavia	23.00
Croatia	26.00
Nigeria	29.00
Romania	29.00
Denmark	34.00
Colombia	41.00
Norway	41.00
Bulgaria	51.00
Paraguay	51.00
Belgium	61.00
Austria	91.00
Cameroon	101.00
Chile	126.00
Mexico	126.00
Scotland	141.00
Morocco	151.00
Sth Africa	201.00
Sth Korea	201.00
USA	201.00
Jamaica	251.00
Saudi Arabia	251.00
Japan	401.00
Tunisia	401.00
Iran	401.00

ERICSSON CUP LEADING SCORERS

19	Damian Mori	Adelaide City
14	Norman Tome	UTS Olympic
13	Pablo Cardozo	Adelaide Sharks
13	Andy Vlahos	Carlton SC
13	Scott Chipperfield	Wollongong Wolves
11	John Anastasiadis	South Melbourne
11	Tom Pondeljak	Melbourne Knights
11	Ivan Kelic	Melbourne Knights
10	Paul Trimboli	South Melbourne

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Play-Offs

By Stuart Jones

Carlton v South Melbourne

Last week's 5-0 victory by Carlton at South Melbourne has been written off by many because Souths rested some players and "had nothing to play for". However, a 5-0 loss, under whatever circumstances, is a big hurdle to overcome. It must be kept in mind that Carlton only lost to the minor premiers by two goals to three in their earlier clash. Weighing heavily on coach Eddie Krncevic's mind who has, like Frank Farina, done a marvellous job in his first year as a coach, is their relatively poor home record. On home results Carlton finished eighth in the league even behind UTS Olympic. On the other hand South Melbourne's away record reads as the third best in the league, having scored 22 goals on their travels but conceded 20.

South's big guns will be out for revenge whilst Carlton's men have nothing to lose really, they have done far better than expected already. Souths won in 1984 and 1991, can they win the first berth in the Grand Final by winning over these two legs or will it be the new boys on the block? The new boys have done better than many expected so can go for it safe in the knowledge that the season has already been a triumph.

For South Melbourne the pressure of succeeding will be much more intense, for second is not good enough.

How the players respond to this pressure will determine their progress over the last few crucial weeks.

Wollongong City v Adelaide City

The last time the Wolves played a finals game they played Adelaide City and lost 0-4 (at Adelaide Cricket Ground). This season they have already defeated the Zebras (2-1 at home) before following up a few weeks later with a postponed game at Hindmarsh Stadium which ended 4-2 to the home team.

Wolves wanted to play their first game at home to put the runs on the board, whilst City are always happy to play away first so both sides are happy with this game at Brandon Park.

The Zebras have a slight advantage knowing after last season's triumph over Marconi in two legs, that no first leg deficit is too big for them.

Adelaide will be on a downer due to recent results but the Wolves are none too happy about conceding two late goals to Sydney United and have to lift themselves. At home Wollongong had a great record but this fell away late in the season and they ended up gaining 26 of a possible 39 points. However, Adelaide City's travels have been even poorer and the away games table saw them finish in seventh place with just four wins from 13 games. The Zebras for-and-against (away) is -5 compared to their home for-and-against of +20.

Marconi Fairfield v Sydney United

United will probably have more fans at Marconi Stadium than at Parramatta Stadium so it could be both these two legs are played at Marconi.

United's away record, second best in the league, would indicate they would not mind two away trips anyhow. Marconi would not mind playing twice at home of course, especially considering they have only lost their twice this season (to Perth in round seven and Carlton in round nine). Marconi have scored 22 goals at home and the Pumas have scored 20 away so it could be a good scoring tie. Marconi will be prepared for anything with the experience of Zoran Matic and the Adelaide City disaster of last year in the back of the players' minds. The Pumas and Stallions met twice this season and over the two games one goal separates them on aggregate, with the first game at Parramatta finishing 1-1 and the second round going 1-0 Marconi's way.

Sydney United, and Dave Mitchell in particular, have proved the critics wrong this season, however, now they have to go out and do it again in the finals.

The club has never won the NSL, whilst for Marconi success was five seasons ago. This local derby will have that added edge of finals football, and will surely bring the supporters back to the game.

ERICSSON CUP Match Reports

STALLIONS RUN WILD

MARCONI FAIRFIELD .....5 MELBOURNE KNIGHTS.....0

By Anthony Ranieri

Marconi Fairfield became the first National League club to score 1000 goals after thrashing Melbourne Knights 5-0 at Marconi Stadium on Sunday night.

The four-time champion had double reason to celebrate as they secured their place in the Top Six series for the third consecutive season.

Marconi scored all five goals in a 41 minute period obliterating Knights' chances to reach the play-offs for the ninth time in the past 10 seasons.

Striker Sean Babic opened the scoring in the 24th minute when he chased hard a loose ball in the penalty box.

The pacy 22-year-old tangled with keeper Joe Didulica, but somehow jolted the ball free and swept home from a narrow angle.

Arguably the goal of the game came right on half-time.

Vlado Zoric selflessly passed to the steaming wingback Luke Casserly who curled a precise cross fcr Awaritefe to blast a header into the net.

Zoric's 50th minute goal came just after the break and it killed the contest. He easily headed home a cross from the left by wingback Brendan Renaud.

Renaud, 24, was rewarded for his assist by scoring goal number four shortly after.

His low but powerful drive deflected off a defender and into the goal. Captain Brad Maloney scored with a similar left foot shot to seal the victory for the home side.

Marconi coach Zoran Matic predictably did not get carried away with the result and even described some of his players as "selfish" and "indisciplined".

"Some of the goals were scored the way we wanted to score them," he said.

Knights coach Ken Worden, who is leaving the club, said he was disappointed to have finished the season on such a bad note.

"It's been a battle all season keeping this small squad together," he reflected.

"We played with two injured defenders and there was a 16-year-old on the bench. We just don't have enough depth.

"We did extremely well this season but tonight has overshadowed the hard work."

The match also marked the end of veteran Alan Davidson's career after 22 years of senior soccer in Australia and overseas.

Francis Awaritefe: Pushing towards his 100th NSL goal.

MARCONI: Covic, M. Babic, Longo, Casserly, McDonald (Care 57), Maloney, S. Babic, Awaritefe (Yoon 64), Renaud (Smith 59), Kim, Zoric.

KNIGHTS: Joe Diduluca, Kovacevic, Jolic, Banini, Nastevski, Pondeljak, Kelic, Davidson (Kutlesovski 45), John Didulica, Markovski, Trupkovic (Collina 72).

SCORERS
Marconi: Babic 23, Awaritefe 43, Zoric 52, Renaud 53, Maloney 64.

CROWD: 4,872

POY
3 Maloney (MF)
2 Awaritefe (MF)
1 Renaud (MF)

SHARKS END FARINA'S FORGETTABLE YEAR

ADELAIDE SHARKS .....2 BRISBANE STRIKERS.....1

By Val Migliaccio

Adelaide Sharks finished their Ericsson Cup season on a high with a sound 2-1 victory over the outgoing A-league champions Brisbane Strikers at Hindmarsh Stadium.

With the match having no bearing on the Top Six finals, the match was played with a free flowing spirit. The Sharks scored the winner in the second minute of injury time when substitute Andrew Borghetto finished off a great Shark attack.

Unfortunately fans stayed away in their droves with only 1,155 hard core supporters witnessing the fine soccer on display.

The Sharks started more confidently with Corey Artone involved with Richie Alagich in the 15th minute, only to see Artone's chip from 10 metres fly just over the crossbar.

In the 34th minute Branko Milosevic put through lively Nathan Day, but Chris Zoricich stopped Day with a brilliant tackle before he could get a shot on goal.

The Sharks took the lead in the 56th minute when Artone robbed Zoricich, rounded last man Glenn Gwynne, strolled towards the penalty area and calmly slotted the ball home past Strikers keeper Clint Bolton for a 1-0 lead.

This goal spurred the Strikers into action and Olyroo defender Steve Laybutt sounded warning bells when his shot from 18-metres was just wide of the mark.

In the 78th minute Danny Invincible scored a brilliant equaliser when his volley from 18-metres cannoned into the back of the net catching the Sharks defence by surprise.

The Sharks then had a final say in the match when all three substitutes were involved in the winning goal.

John Cutillo won the ball on the half-way line, in turn released Jim Tsekinis who squared the perfect ball to Andrew Borghetto who made no mistake from close-range.

Branko Milosevic

SHARKS: Miller, Tibaldi, Milosevic, Kokonoplitis, Artone, Alagich, Day (Borghetto 72), Duric (Tsekinis 68), Hristodolou (Cutillo 80), Misailidis, Westerveldt.

STRIKERS: Bolton, Gwynne, Zoricich, Williams, S Cranney, Brown (T Cranney 46), Battistin (Brownlie 75), Harris, Laybutt, Invincible, Srhoj (Brayshaw 46).

SCORERS
Sharks: Artone 56
Borghetto 92
Strikers: Invincible 78
CROWD: 1,155
POY
3 Misailidis (AS)
2 Artone (AS)
1 Westerveldt (AS)

FALCONS FAREWELL FRANK

GIPPSLAND FALCONS.....1 ADELAIDE CITY.....2

By Damian Tripodi

A 43rd minute goal scored by diminutive striker Joe Tricarico was enough to give the Gippsland Falcons a victory in their final game of the NSL season.

Tricarico was able to intercept an Archie Thompson free-kick and head the ball into the net for the only goal of the game.

For the star-studded Adelaide City, the game turned out to be a nightmare — the defeat was costly, as they had to win in order to hold on to the second place and the double chance in the finals.

For the Falcons the victory meant a dignified finale to a season of fluctuating fortunes.

It was also a fitting farewell for coach Frank Arok, who decided to retire and take up an administrative position with Sydney club UTS Olympic.

As a spectacle, the game did not provide the most auspicious of circumstances with which to finish the season, due to incessant rain which lasted for the entire match. The condition of the ground didn't allow either side to demonstrate any real skills and shots at goal were at a premium.

The Gippslanders began the game with a slight ascendancy in the early minutes. The first chance presented itself in the fourth minute, through a piece of clever play by Archie Thompson coming from the right of goal. The Adelaide defence, however, managed to move in and save the day.

The South Australians gradually got some pattern of play going and although only in patches, demonstrated some of the class which up to today took them to second place on the ladder.

Today, however, the dynamic duo of Damian Mori and Michael Brooks, who are noted for deadly finishing were well held by Doug Marcina, Claudio Canosa and Clayton Bell.

Nevertheless, both strikers showed patches of brilliance. Mori almost scored with a great curling shot early in the game and, midway through the second-half, with an excellent solo run, took on almost the entire Falcons defence only to be denied by Falcons keeper Jim Kourtis, and again in the dying minutes of the game, this time the Socceroo striker was denied by a desperate Marcina tackle.

Following the Falcons goal Adelaide City and Australian captain Alex Tobin had to leave the ground due to a calf injury, which could put him in doubt for the finals.

His exit distorted the Zebras' attempts to recover something before half-time.

In the second-half the visitors, who have a history of coming from behind, looked rather edgy.

The Falcons, even without five of their regular senior players were showing tenacity and determination and at the 57th minute almost extended their lead when a Bill Mitroulas shot was deflected by Jason Pektovic.

With the entry of substitutes Mark Yates and Dino Mennillo in the 59th minute, Adelaide coach John Nyskohus made some structural changes.

With an extra man in attack, the Zebras kept pressing forward with the intent on attack, but despite their efforts, the Falcons managed to hold on.

A jubilant Falcons coach, Frank Arok stated after the game that he was not only delighted, but deeply moved by the efforts of the players. "I am grateful to them in the way that they finished the season against a team of champions," said the coach.

"The young players will ensure the future of this club and Soccer in the region. I hope that they will be nurtured and that the board of management will work closely with the next guy."

The Adelaide City coach, John Nyskohus stated that his team should have put the game beyond reach in the first-half. "That goal unsettled us," stated the coach. "How could we allow a guy five foot four head a goal home after a free kick? We had several chances to consolidate, but we could not do it," ended Nyskohus.

FALCONS: Kourtis, Canosa, Marcina, Foy (Byrne 82), Thompson (Mihajlovic, 92), Macnicol, Tricarico, Hutchinson, Mitroulas, Di Iorio (Tsaltas 74).

CITY: Pektovic, Armour, Yates (Hassell 59), Ivanovic, Tobin (Dodd 43rd), Constanzo, Mori, Gibson, Trajanovski (Mennillo 59).

SCORER
Falcons: Tricarico 41.

CROWD: 2,600

POY
3 Marcina (G)
2 Armour (AC)
1 Macnicol (G)

WOMEN'S WRITES

BY JANENE MAR

TANZEY APPOINTED ASSISTANT

The Australian Women's Soccer Association last week announced the appointment of Chris Tanzey as its first full-time Assistant National Coach to work alongside National Coach Greg Brown, with women's soccer establishing its centralised program at the AIS in Canberra.

Tanzey is currently ACT's Intensive Training Centre (ITC) Coach, operating from the ACT Academy of Sport, a combined position which also sees him as head of the Academy's boys' program.

With Brown also a former women's ITC Coach, AWSA Chief Executive Warren Fisher is pleased with the appointment, the coveted position attracting a large number of applicants from both men's and women's football.

"The successful recruiting of quality coaches into our ITC program over the last three years is evidenced in that it has yielded both our Assistant National Coach and our National Coach," said Fisher. "It is a reflection of the opportunities now available in women's soccer for coaches to further their careers."

Tanzey, age 41, will commence on 1 June this year, and takes on the new position at a most exciting time. By 1 July, the National Squad members will have relocated to Canberra where they commence training full-time as a group at the AIS in preparation for the World Cup Qualifiers, next year's World Cup, and the Olympic Games.

"It was a bit of a surprise, really," said Tanzey of his appointment. "You never think you're going to get it – you always think it'll be someone else, so it's great. I'm really excited about working at the Institute with the National Squad and with Greg."

"It's a bit hard to put into words really," added Tanzey. "It's the challenge – working with the best. It's different again, and I need that – having a challenge all the time, to get out of the comfort zone. Still, I'm a bit apprehensive. It's a different type of job, and it'll make me a better coach."

The role of an assistant coach is a specialised position in itself and takes a certain type of person. An assistant needs to be a quality coach is his own right, as well as being able to comfortably work under the direction of the head coach. He needs to be able to contribute to the program, whilst working to the same philosophy and ideals of his boss. His personality and style must be such that it works in tandem with that of the head coach, although in many respects he may be quite different. It's a role which Tanzey has held early in his coaching career, and one for which he feels he has a solid grounding.

"I think I've got to be a good foil for Greg," explained Tanzey. "I don't think it's good to both be exactly the same. We've both got different qualities and I think we should compliment each other well."

"I've got two assistants (at the Academy) – one with the men's and one for the women's – and they've been brilliant. I've got to think what have made them really good and do that, but on a slightly different scale. The head coach has got to be able to trust his assistant, to know he's going to do what you want him to. Greg needs to know that I'll be supportive and back him up."

"That's the only way it can work – it's really a team thing. At the end of the day, he calls the shots – there can only be one boss. Obviously we'll sit and talk and I'll have a bit of input, but it's important that everyone can see that loyalty. And it's the whole program, not just me and Greg, to stay solid like a team."

With centralisation in Canberra, the national squad program will be pioneering a new era. The project will evolve to new levels of professionalism and development. As the new member of the AIS machine, women's football will also move further into the public spotlight, and come under closer scrutiny from those within as well as those from other sports and organisations.

Being involved during its planning stages and seeing the program take its first steps. Tanzey is mindful of the important of establishing the right impressions and policies from the very start.

"I'd like to be able to say after whatever amount of time, that when people look at the women's soccer program, there is a respect for it. We must be really well run and professional, and I think we've got a lot of respect already. But moving into the AIS, it's a fantastic opportunity to push women's soccer even further. We can't afford to stuff it up."

"You don't get respect just because you're at the AIS, It's doing all the little things well, which you won't get a pat on the back for, but after time, all those little things put together will earn that respect. I think with the people we've got in there, we can do that."

The role will also see Tanzey take on the responsibility of National Youth Coach. With no international activity at youth level for a number of years, the structure of a formalised youth program will be another new development of the elite program as a whole, working as a feeder to the national squad and building for the betterment of future squads.

"I'm looking forward to that, seeing the players coming through," added Tanzey. "It will give the younger players a chance to break through over the next two years, and also look beyond then. This is the time we have to do it, to give them the experience of what it's like to be in the first-team. Being involved in camps and tours will educate them of what to expect when they make the step up. We will build younger kids with older heads on their shoulders."

Tanzey felt that it would be an extension of what the national league has provided, where these younger athletes have gained the opportunity of playing against the best. "This will give them greater experience, make them ready for later, and help the transition to be a smooth one."

As youth coach, Tanzey will be placing a high priority at looking what's happening in the game nationwide. The ITCs will be playing a major role in this communication and development network, with Tanzey liaising and seeking input and feedback from the ITC coaches.

Tanzey, currently undertaking his High Performance Level 3 qualifications, was a professional player at the prestigious Liverpool in his homeland England, starting as an apprentice, then spending four years there full-time playing reserve grade. "Then they said I was too little," recalls Tanzey. "There were a few better players than me that never got the chance (to play first grade), but I was lucky to be there, although I didn't think it then."

At age 22, he came to Australia on a playing/working holiday, intending to stay only a year, but ended up making it his new home. In Australia, he played for various clubs around the country, before establishing his coaching career in the ACT Premier League.

"There's no way I thought I'd be coaching women, but I knew Tom Sermanni, and I asked him what it was like. He said it was fantastic, the best thing he ever did, but you've got to do it to find out. And for me it has been the best thing I've ever done in coaching. It's improved my coaching too – it's a challenge, and you must always work hard at it. I just needed educating."

After four years with the ACTAS boys, and just over two years running the women's ITC program, Tanzey also expresses his sadness in leaving them behind. "It's great getting this job, but it sinks in you've got to leave a job behind too. The boys' turnover of players is a bit greater, but the girls stay pretty much the same and it's pretty tough telling them you're not going to be there anymore."

"And the academy itself has been absolutely superb. They're a fantastic set of people for all the sports – you couldn't work in a better place. All they want to do is help the coaches to help the players – everyone gets on with their job. The only other place like it has been Liverpool."

It is clear from talking to Tanzey that he views his players not just as athletic machines, but as people, each with their own characteristics and personalities, strengths and weaknesses. And it is these other areas off the park which also sometimes require a coach's attention. Especially now with the scholarship players making big sacrifices and commitment in moving to Canberra, people skills will be of vital importance.

"That's going to be one of the most important things – over the first few months helping the players to settle in," said Tanzey. "There are plenty of other people there with much more experience in that area, but the players will still come back to the coaches. I'd like to think I can help there too – that's important, that the players feel they can rely on you.

"It's not so long ago that both of us were playing, so we're still thinking like players in some respects. If I think of the things I respected as a player, and make sure they are there, and give plenty of support.

"I think I've done a fair bit on and off the field. Like life, there are experiences both good and bad, and that helps in your coaching. It's how you deal with things – when you fall down, how you pick yourself up. When I see things in players, I think how I handled that situation, and give them a bit of insight without them having to experience it."

"At Liverpool, I was really lucky with the people there. It was a huge organisation, but they did things very simple, and you''ve got to be able to appreciate that. I'm not going into the Institute thinking I've got to be someone different – I'm just going to be me. To keep things simple, make it simple for the players, and provide the right environment."

NSWIS TAKE RAIN-MARRED CLUB CHALLENGE

NSW Institute of Sport's talented young combination claimed the honours with an emphatic 3-0 victory over visitors Port Moresby in the Easter Sunday final of the National Club Challenge at Sydney's Christie Park.

The entertaining finale was the highlight of what soon unfolded as a disappointing weekend where half of the scheduled play was lost to the torrential rain.

Port Moresby, along with Morobe, Papua New Guinea's top two regional sides, had made the journey south for the tournament as part of their selection process and preparation for the Oceania World Cup Qualifiers set down for Auckland in October.

After months with barely a hint of rain, the annual Easter event was given a bad omen the night before kick-off with flooding rains and storms causing chaos over Sydney.

Port Moresby were first up on the park on Good Friday with interest high from the Aussie contingent to gauge the quality of the unknown visitors. By the second-half of their match against local wildcard entry Gladesville Ravens, the heavy rain had returned and was starting to affect the quality of play. Port Moresby however had shown themselves as fast and athletic, preferring to play a lot of long balls forward for their strikers, creating pressure on the opposition defence. It was soon evident their trump player was the tall, strong striker Nelly Taman, who struck two great goals in their opening 3-0 victory.

Marconi was unusually tame in front of goal in their match against perennial entrants Canberra City, and would have been disappointed to come away with a scoreless draw. Canberra too squandered a couple of great chances to claim the match.

The star-studded Sydney United proved far too strong for first timers West Adelaide, combining nicely to produce two classy goals with no replay.

The heavy rain continued to spoil the action, as thunder and lightning drew ever closer. The skies darkened with the kick-off of the NSWIS versus Morobe fixture, and the rain bucketed down in tropical proportions. At the 22 minute mark, the match was abandoned, and minutes later, the pitch had become a lake, ending all hope of completing the remaining four-and-a-half matches for Friday.

With rain constant throughout the night, the whole of Saturday was declared a 'no soccer' zone after an early morning pitch inspection.

Fortunately, play was able to continue on Sunday, although much of the impetus had been lost with so many games cancelled. One Saturday round was shifted to Sunday with the 25 minute halves reduced to twenty.

The morning round saw WSL big names Marconi and Sydney United suffer losses at the hands of Port Moresby and NSW Institute respectively, and it soon became clear that these two winners were the likely finals contenders.

But late in the day, the Morobe team made an official protest to the organisers. Also still in the race for a finals berth, the Morobe wanted their abandoned match against NSWIS replayed. After deliberations, it was agreed the remainder of the game be played, and a thirty minute contest ensued. The game became something of a semi-final, with the winner to claim the spot in the final against Port Moresby. The Institute made no mistake and posted three solid goals past the visitors, ending their hope of an all PNG final.

After only an hour's rest, NSWIS continued their goals rampage in the final, killing Port Moresby's run of victories with a skilful passing game, dominating play throughout and creating chance after chance on goal.

The locals almost had the ball in the back of the net inside the opening two minutes following a fantastic overlapping build-up on the left flank. Port Moresby then settled and sent forward some long threatening balls up the flanks to stretch the home defence wide. But NSWIS pushed forward at every opportunity, unlucky with a number of shots, including a pearler of a side foot first-time volley from Sarah Walsh wide on the right.

NSWIS finally converted their dominance onto the scoreboard, taking the lead right on the thirty minute mark, Kelly Golebiowski executing a beautifully sharp header to hit home a corner kick.

Play continued in the same vein after the break, with NSWIS doubling their lead within two minutes of the resumption. A Port Moresby attack was cleaned up by the defence and a long searching ball unleashed toward goal. Dynamo forward Walsh won the race and shrugged off two challengers before calmly smashing the ball over the keeper into the roof of the net from the edge of the 18-yard box.

Port Moresby had their only two clear chances on goals in consecutive plays soon after. A short through ball for Taman ended with a thumping shot from 15 metres on the right which produced a spectacular flying save NSWIS keeper Cassandra Kell. The ensuing corner saw Port Moresby almost in with a free header which sailed just wide of the post.

In the 43rd minute, Walsh scored her second, neatly finishing a typical build-up with a drive from 12 metres on the left. Two minutes later, sweeper Danielle Clarke almost added another, her free-kick from 25 metres rocking the crossbar.

For the 3-0 victory, the NSWIS outfit claimed the Challenge trophy and prizemoney.

NSWIS: Cassandra Kell, Danielle Clarke, Thea Slatyer, Sarah Walsh, Tracy Thomas, Rhian Davies, Heather Garriock, Kelly Golebiowski, Georgina Lomas, Taryn Rockall, Kate Hensman, Amanda Parker, Ashleigh Hewson, Amanda Boyle, Erin Hunter.

PORT MORESBY: Christine Petrus, Miriam Lanta, Cathy Salaiau, Phoebe Rarabun, Judith Michael, Loanna Mave, Tabitha Suwae, Ikanau Matangiau, Nelly Taman, Fiona Wekas, Annette Kora, Catherine Davani, LYnna Waho, Geraldine Eka, Margaret Lulvai, Rita James.

NATIONAL CLUB CHALLENGE

Friday 10 April
Round 1

Port Moresby 3 (Nelly Taman 2, Loanna Mave) defeated Gladesville Ravens 0; Marconi Fairfield 0 drew Canberra City 0; Sydney United 2 (Janine Riddington, Nicole Bonnyman) defeated West Adelaide 0; NSW Institute 3 (Kate Hensman, Thea Slatyer, Heather Garriock) defeated Morobe 0.

Sunday 12 April
Round 2

Port Moresby 1 (Nelly Taman) defeated Marconi Fairfield 0; Morobe 1 (Freda Niangi) defeated Canberra City 0; West Adelaide 2 (Kristy Moore 2) drew Gladesville Ravens 2 (Elizabeth Cotton 2); NSW Institute 1 (Sarah Walsh) defeated Sydney United 0.

Round 3

Morobe 0 drew Gladesville Ravens 0; NSW Institute 4 (Sarah Walsh 3, Kelly Golebiowski) defeated West Adelaide 1 (Kristy Moore); Port Moresby 1 (Nelly Taman) defeated Canberra City 0; Marconi 1 (Amanda Poulton) defeated Sydney United 0.

Final

NSW Institute 3 (Kelly Golebiowski, Sarah Walsh 2) defeated Port Moresby 0.

COMPETITION LADDER

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
NSW Institute	3	3	0	0	8	1	7	9
Port Moresby	3	3	0	0	5	0	5	9
Marconi Fairfield	3	1	1	1	1	1	0	4
Morobe	3	1	1	1	1	3	-2	4
Sydney United	3	1	0	2	2	2	0	3
Gladesville Ravens	3	0	2	1	2	5	-3	2
Canberra City	3	0	1	2	0	2	-2	1
West Adelaide	3	0	1	2	3	8	-5	1

TEAM SCENE
WOLLONGONG CITY 1998

UNDER 13

YOUTH LEAGUE

Travis Armstrong
Andres Ayala
Lance Barrie
Luke Everingham
Shane Grant
Daniel Jones
Dean Kerr
Luke Kotamanidis
Jay Lucas
Mathew Miller
David Poeira
Josh Quirk
Lex Simons
Ashley Sulcs
Mark Thurling

Coach:
Geoff Wilson

UNDER 14

YOUTH LEAGUE

Arthur
Andronopoulos
Ben Bartlett
Pedrag Bojic
David Boscosuro
Michael DeGori
Nathan Dimaggio
Darren Jones
Alex Kotevski
Joel Lockard
Leo Marin
Adam Pazitnaj
Andrew Sheilds
Chris Srbinovski
David Trujillo
Mathew Werakso

Coach:
Doug Hearn

(If you would like to see your U/6 - U/16 team appear in 'Team Scene', send your photos in with CLEARLY printed names and, if you would like your photos back, please send a stamped addressed envelope also. REMEMBER: It doesn't have to be your best team, nor just for the boys. Send in single photos or the whole of your school/clubs teams together. YOUTH are our Soccer future, Bless them).

UNDER 15 YOUTH LEAGUE

Andrew Bastianon
Paul Carboni
David Chilcott
Jason Clowry
Luke Dean
Leighal Dellis
David Iera
Shaun King
Joel Kotamanidis
Garrath McPherson
Zoran Markovski
Joseph Moriana
Phillip Nosworthy
Peter Peralta
Mitchell Prentice
Casey Sargeson

Coach:
John Griffin

UNDER 16 YOUTH LEAGUE

Ben Baker
Nathan Broad
Joseph Cachia
Igor Cankulovski
Nicholas Karakolevski
Shane Lockhart
Jorge Perez
Brendon Santalab
Andrew Skoczon
Craig Smith
Daniel Solitro
Panayotis Tzolakidis
Scott Whalan
Adam White
Lee Zaharias

Coach:
Barney King

Victorian Soccer Federation

FAWKNER 0 ALTONA 1

By George Koukeris

Altona Magic inflicted Fawkner Blues' first loss of the season with a 1-0 win at Smith Reserve on Wednesday night in front of 1,200 spectators.

The game started off like a house on fire with Fawkner having the first opportunity in the opening minute through Ivan Duzel with a long range effort.

At half-time the score was locked at 0-0. For Fawkner, frustration at how many chances were lost was exhausting for the legs of the players to keep up with the pace.

Altona had similar problems too. Their co-ordination lacked miserably to say the least. But those problems would be erased with just a few alterations.

In the second stanza, Zoran Petrevski was substituted for John Sapazovski to add fire into Altona's strike force. Sapazovski blitzed on the right wing to give long balls endlessly into the penalty zone.

In the 63rd minute he cracked the safe by belting a long volley on target for Sash Becvinovski who headed the ball past goalkeeper Maurice Gonzalez.

Blues: Gonzalez, Tramontana, Grimuad, P.Ferrante, Di Sauro (K.Simsek), V.Ferrante, Bordignon, Biskic, Emmanuele, Duzel, Vassiliadis (De Santis)

Magic: McGrath, Runje, Markovski, Tasevski, Petrevski (Sapazovski), Micevski, Rusmir, Georgopoulos, Fak, Becvinovski, Velkovski (Trpcevski)

Votes: 3 Becvinovski (AM), 2-Emmanuele (FB), 1-Sapazovski (AM)

LEADING SCORERS

9	Emmanuele (Fawkner Blues)
8	Gnjidic (Bulleen Inter Kings)
7	Lazarevski (Thomastown Zebras)
	Cuculevski (Thomastown Zebras)
	Becvinovski (Altona Magic)
5	Papettas (Bentleigh Greens)
	S.Rados (St Albans Saints)

LEADING VOTES

15	Magnacca (Sunshine Georgies)
14	Gnjidic (Bulleen Inter Kings)
13	Emmanuele (Fawkner Blues)
12	Becvinovski (Altona Magic)
11	Field (Sunshine Georgies)
	Cuculevski (Thomastown Zebras)
10	Fak (Altona Magic)
8	Emsovski (Preston Lions)
	Villani (South Dandenong)
	Mladenovic (Springvale White Eagles)
	Sianidis (St Albans Saints)
	Jolevski (Thomastown Zebras)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Fawkner Blues	11	7	3	1	20	9	24
Altona Magic	11	7	2	2	14	7	23
St Albans Saints	10	6	2	2	16	7	20
Sunshine Georgies	11	6	1	4	16	17	19
Thomastown Zebras	10	5	2	3	21	12	17
Bulleen Inter Kings	11	4	5	2	14	10	17
Bentleigh Greens	11	4	4	3	10	12	16
Green Gully Cavaliers	11	4	3	4	17	13	15
Port Melbourne Sharks	11	4	2	5	15	15	14
Springvale White Eagles	11	4	2	5	13	17	14
Moorabbin City	11	3	2	6	12	20	11
Preston Lions	11	3	1	7	10	14	10
South Dandenong	11	2	1	8	17	28	7
Heidelberg United	11	1	2	8	9	23	5

GREEN GULLY 1 HEIDELBERG 1

By John Rigas

Melbourne Knights captain Andrew Marth made his debut as Green Gully coach against Heidelberg United which resulted in a 1-1 draw at Green Gully Reserve.

It was a disappointing result for the Cavaliers who need victory to stay in touch with the top five.

Heidelberg started off the better, creating the first opportunity, when a George Svigos shot flew across the face of the goal in the 3rd minute.

United's George Lenetis also tried his luck from long range after he outpaced the Gully defence.

Gully striker Zlatko Donev could have put his team in front just before half-time with a header that went narrowly wide.

It was Green Gully who struck first blood through Donev in the 54th minute when he was faced with a one-on-one situation with Heidelberg goalkeeper Andrija Gal.

Heidelberg youngster Pat Liapis equalised in the final minute with a free-kick which took a deflection and flew past Gully goalkeeper Chris Vella.

Cavaliers: Vella, Stafrace, Dimitrelos (Spiteri), Mangos, Douglas, Brown, Suric, Stojcevski, Papadopoulos, Babic, Donev

United: Gal, Makris, Alexiou. Jugovic, Anastasiou, Mededovic, Svigos, Lenetis, Tsoumerkas, Stefanidis (Liapis), Georgiadis.

Votes: 3- Mangos (GG), 2- Stojcevski (GG), 1- Svigos (HU)

PREMIER LEAGUE CLUB REPORT CARDS

By Dwyght Tuffnell

ALTONA MAGIC

Ladder position: 2nd
Leading scorer:
Sash Becvinovski - 7
Leading vote getter
Dean Fak - 10

The champions of the last three seasons are once again up there.

Minimal changes to their impressive squad over this period have seen them dominate the league, and they are favourites to take out a fourth consecutive title this year.

Ace striker Sash Becvinovski continues to knock in goals, while a solid defence including Dean Fak, Tom Markovski and Robert Runje is one of the meanest in the league.

Coach Ian Dobson is spoilt for choice with the likes of former Gippsland Falcons players Vasko Trpcevski warming the Altona bench.

Dobson has introduced outstanding 16-year-old prospect Daniel Vasilevski into the side, another young gun off the seemingly endless Altona production line.

They also gained Marjan Tasevski back from Melbourne Knights to further bolster their line up.

Another finals campaign is assured for the Magic, whether or not they win the league again remains to be seen.

BENTLEIGH GREENS

Ladder position: 7th
Leading scorer:
John Papettas - 5
Leading vote getter:
Theo Constantinou - 7

The Greens have had a topsy-turvy starting eleven rounds, at times brilliant, but also ordinary on occasions.

Last season they scored goals at an average of nearly four a game but the loss of striker Juan Nilo (Heidelberg) and outstanding midfielder Ike Alagiozidis (Oakliegh) has cut down their scoring options.

John Papettas has been scoring goals, but a tally of five to date suggests the Greens are light in the striker department.

Zoran Todorovski is on the comeback trail and his inclusion into the side will go a long way to solving those problems.

Last years Pascoe Vale Sportscene/ABSW Player of the year Nick Van Egmond hasn't really recaptured the form that saw him take out the award, scoring 17 goals along the way.

The Greens played the finals last year, without making a great impression but this season they'll have their hands full securing a place in the top five come the seasons end.

BULLEEN INTER KINGS

Ladder position: 6th
Leading scorer:
Danny Gnjidic - 8
Leading vote getter:
Danny Gnjidic - 14

The aristocrats of the league, the Kings have not got off to the best of starts.

Gary Cole has replaced Bogdan Bonk as coach after some unsatisfactory results, culminating with a 1-3 loss to Sunshine Georgies.

Danny Gnjidic, recruited from Springvale White Eagles, has been in terrific form and his combination with Eric Hollingsworth up front is one of the most feared in the league.

Their other big signing, Zdravko Atanasovski, has not fared as well, being sent-off twice in the opening eleven games.

Paul Della Rocca and the rest of the Bulleen defence have been solid and since Anthony Grbac was coaxed out of retirement, their midfield has been solid.

Despite the departure of Bonk, the Kings are far from crisis point and last season's runners-up should see finals action again this year.

FAWKNER BLUES

Ladder position: 1st
Leading scorer:
Santo Emmanuele - 9
Leading vote getter:
Santo Emmanuele - 11

The Blues have been a real surprise packet this year, sitting atop of the league after nearly being relegated last season.

They have suffered just one loss so far, in the last round at home to Altona Magic.

Coach Ken Murphy has a strong squad at his disposal and Santo Emmanuele, after a years absence, has been one of the stand out players in the league.

Experienced former Melbourne Knights midfielders Ivan Duzel and Joe Biskic have been damaging at times in the middle of the park for Fawkner.

These two factors, as well as having a fairly settled line-up, have got the Blues where they are and there is no reason why they can't keep on going the way they are and make the play-offs.

GREEN GULLY CAVALIERS

Ladder position: 8th
Leading scorer:
Nick Papadopoulos and Zlatko Donev - 4
Leading vote getter:
Pece Stojcevski - 5

Pre-season favourites for the title, Green Gully have not performed up to expectations.

Coach Chris Taylor paid for the poor start with his job. He has since been replaced by Melbourne Knights skipper Andrew Marth.

Leaving the club shortly after him was experienced midfielder John Waddell, who was relieved of his job as assistant coach when Taylor was sacked.

Nick Papadopoulos, John Dimitrelos, Zlatko Donev and Steve Mangos were all brought in at the start of the year, making Gully's probably the strongest squad in the league.

But it hasn't gone to plan. The Cavaliers have a real battle on their hands to make the top five.

The team is bound to improve in the second-half of the season but it may not be enough for them.

HEIDELBERG UNITED

Ladder position: 14th
Leading scorer:
Juan Nilo - 3
Leading vote getter:
Juna Nilo - 5

The once mighty Heidelberg United look as though they will be playing in the First Division next season, unless a miracle can prevent them from being relegated.

Heidelberg have won just one of their first eleven games and have only five points to show near the half way point of the season.

They sacked coach Angelo Koutos early in the season, replacing him with Dusan Kalezic.

Kalezic has an awful amount of work to do if he is to save the Bergers from the drop.

Pre-season signing from Bentleigh Greens, Juan Nilo, has been about their best player, along with midfielder George Svigos.

Heidelberg need a lot more, though with a largely inexperienced squad, it will be difficult.

MOORABBIN CITY

Ladder position: 11th
Leading scorer:
David Hanna - 3
Leading vote getter:
Liam Caffrey - 6

Promoted last season, Moorabbin City looked as though they would go straight back down after a disastrous start.

But things have picked up for Moorabbin, and as they have been getting adjusted to the Premier League, they have recording some impressive results.

A 5-0 victory over Heidelberg was followed with a shock 1-0 win at St Albans.

Midfielders David Costa and David Colosimo have been two good signings and Liam Caffrey has performed well in his first shot at the Premier League.

In Steve Marley, Bruce McLaren and Gary McMullen, Moorabbin have no shortage of experience and with their help the likes of Cameron Leopold and William Armour improve with each match.

Moorabbin are very unlikely to make the top five but they should be good enough to avoid relegation back down to the First Division.

PORT MELBOURNE SHARKS

Ladder position: 9th
Leading scorer:
Daniel Allsopp - 4
Leading vote getter:
Andy Vargas - 6

The Sharks, like Green Gully, recruited heavily in the off-season and, they too got off to poor start.

They seem to have put that behind them now and are making a charge towards the top five.

Coach Andy Bozikas has brought in Andy Vargas and Daniel Allsopp both on loan from Carlton, and the move has already started to pay off.

Allsopp has scored four goals and Vargas, along with his brother Roddy, have been in terrific form.

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been another impressive performer as has Alex Efstathiou.

Other new players such as Arthur Tsirtsakis, Bill Tsiakos and Evis Heath are beginning to settle in and the Sharks will be one of the teams to watch in the second half of the season as they attempt to claim a finals berth.

PRESTON LIONS

Ladder position: 12th
Leading scorer: Sash Markovski - 4
Leading vote getter: Chris Emsovski - 8

A finalist last season, Preston Lions are hovering too close to the relegation zone for their liking.

Preston haven't had too many changes from last year's line-up and their lowly ladder position is hard to explain.

They managed to sign Sash Markovski from Sunshine Georgies but he hasn't been able to find the form that saw him score 25 goals last year.

Anthony Burlak was also brought in from Springvale White Eagles, but he too hasn't had a great affect.

Chris Emsovski's form has been one positive aspect in a poor season to date for the Lions.

With the squad that Preston have they'll be able to avoid relegation, but, another finals campaign is out of the question.

SOUTH DANDENONG

Ladder position: 13th
Leading scorer: Reshat Mezensof and Giuseppe Corallo - 4
Leading vote getter: Carlo Villani - 8

The other promoted side from last year, South Dandenong have not performed as badly as their position on the table suggests.

They have a potentially potent midfield and strike force but it has been their defence, which has leaked 28 goals, which is letting them down.

They parted with coach Paul Truman recently and replaced him with Fadil Muriqi, who as well as coaching, plays in midfield.

Former Gippsland Falcons player Carlo Villani has been in sparkling form for South Dandenong as has recent arrival Giuseppe Corallo.

Corallo has scored four goals in two games and along with Reshat Mezensof leads the club's scoring.

With the possibility of more new players arriving, South Dandenong are set to battle hard against relegation.

SPRINGVALE WHITE EAGLES

Ladder position: 10th
Leading scorer: own goals - 3
Leading vote getter: Predrag Mladenovic - 8

The White Eagles have had a horror start to the Premier League season.

Their coach Dusan Kalezic resigned and they have had player injuries that no other club in the league can match.

Influential midfielder Predrag Mladenovic will miss the rest of the season after breaking his ankle and striker Carlos Retre is only beginning to get back to some fitness.

His absence has created a big goalscoring problem for the White Eagles, as their leading scorer would suggest.

The loss of both Danny Gnjidic (Bulleen) and Zlatko Mihajlovic (Gippsland Falcons), have not been covered adequately enough.

New coach John Gardiner has some hard work to do if the White Eagles are to make the finals.

ST ALBANS SAINTS

Ladder position: 3rd
Leading scorer: Slavko Rados - 5
Leading vote getter: Kon Sianidis - 8

Like Fawkner, St Albans' ladder position is something of a surprise.

Their campaign to date has been impressive and only the home loss to Moorabbin City is a black mark against them.

The Saints have a better squad than what looks on paper, and under coach Vlado Vanis, they should be there come finals time.

Slavko Rados has been a focal point for the Saints but it has been a settled side, together for a few years, that has held the Saints in good stead this year.

And all this has come about after losing last year's leading scorer Ivan Colina to Western Suburbs and the absence, through injury, of skipper Mick Colina.

SUNSHINE GEORGIES

Ladder position: 4th
Leading scorer: Alfonso Opazo and Anthony Magnacca - 4
Leading vote getter: Anthony Magnacca - 15

The Georgies weren't supposed to be a force this season, but after 11 rounds they sit in fourth position.

Coach Gussy McLeod lost some important players from last season, such as Sash Markovski, and he didn't recruit too heavily either.

The Georgies have been well served by skipper Spencer Field and Robert Krajacic this year, but it has been their younger players who have been the stand outs.

Anthony Magnacca has been in fine form, Brandon Vassallo in midfield has been terrific and other young players like Joe De Bono, Ilija Dragicevic and Alfonso Opazo have all been pulling their weight.

If they can string some consistent performances together, Sunshine could make the finals.

THOMASTOWN ZEBRAS

Ladder position: 5th
Leading scorer: Nick Lazarevski and Nick Cuculevski - 7
Leading vote getter: Nick Cuculevski - 11

Thomastown Zebras are sitting in the top five after a tremendous start to the season.

One of last season's most disappointing teams, the Zebras have turned it around and could secure their first ever finals appearance come August.

Nick Lazarevski and Nick Cuculevski have scored seven goals apiece in a team that is currently the leading scorer in the league.

Last year's Gold Medal winner, George Jolevski, has been brought back in from Altona Magic and he, along with Lazarevski and Cuculevski, have been in stunning form.

If there is a problem with the Zebras form it is that too few players have found the net, making you wonder where the goals would come from if Lazarevski or Cuculevski were injured.

CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE DIVISION ONE FIXTURES

Round 4 - Sunday April 19

Melton Reds v Kingston City
Ringwood City v Werribee City
Springvale City v Westgate
Doncaster Rovers v Lalor United

CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE DIVISION TWO FIXTURES

Round 4 - Saturday April 18

Yarraville/Glen Eira v Old Scotch Waverley
Frankston Strikers v Maroondah Arrows
Melbourne City v East Richmond
Knox City v Cranbourne
Mooroolbark v Regent Bulla
Essendon Bruns. Royals v Altona City
Oakleigh v Broadmeadows City

CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE DIVISION THREE FIXTURES

Round 4 - Friday April 17

Geelong v North Coburg United

Saturday April 18

Pascoe Vale v Chelsea
Frankston Pines v Bell Park
South Werribee v Diamond Valley United
Banyule City v Fitzroy City
Keysborough v Keilor Park

CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE DIVISION FOUR FIXTURES

Round 4 - Saturday April 18

Sunbury United v Williamstown
South Caulfield v Geelong Rangers
Moreland City v Sandringham City
Corio v Melton
Western Eagles v Seaford United
Nunawading City v Langwarrin

PROVISIONAL LEAGUE DIVISION ONE FIXTURES

Round 4 - Saturday April 18

North Sunshine Eagles v Monbulk
Croxton Park v Brandon Park
Lalor v Lyndale United
Springvale Condors v Mitcham United
Riversdale v Glenroy
Endeavour United - bye
Templestowe Eagles - bye

PROVISIONAL LEAGUE DIVISION TWO SOUTH/EAST FIXTURES

Round 2 - Saturday April 18

Dandenong v Monash University
Dingley City v Doveton
Morwell Pegasus v Old Camberwell Gram.
Braeside United v Newborough/Yallourn
Berwick City v Waverley Wanderers
Noble Park v Ashburton

PROVISIONAL LEAGUE DIVISION TWO NORTH/WEST/CENTRAL FIXTURES

Round 2 - Saturday April 18

Meadow Park v La Trobe University
Melbourne University v Hoppers Crossing
Sydenham Park v Keon Park
Elwood City v South Yarra
Broadmeadows United v Uni. of Melbourne
Ballarat v Brunswick City

PROVISIONAL LEAGUE DIVISION THREE SOUTH/EAST/CENTRAL FIXTURES

Round 2 - Sunday April 19

Clayton Inter v Heatherton United
Flemington Falcons v Parkmore
Ivanhoe United v Endeavour Hills
Noble Park United v Dandenong Inter
Thornbury United v Collingwood City
North Caulfield v Caulfield United

PROVISIONAL LEAGUE DIVISION THREE NORTH/WEST FIXTURES

Round 2 - Sunday April 19

Somerton City v Northern United
Brimbank v North Reservoir
North Glenroy v West Preston
Whittlesea United v Watsonia Heights
Keilor United - bye

CRAZY JOHN'S
MOBILEWORLD COMMUNICATIONS

TACKLE DIABETES HEALTHY DIET TRY IT

"Healthy Diet — Try It"

PREMIER LEAGUE RESULTS

Round 11:

Green Gully Cavaliers 1 (Donev) - Heidelberg United 1 (Liapis) 3-4 Pens
Fawkner Blues 0 - Altona Magic 1 (Becvinovski) 5-0 Pens.
St Alb 4 Thom 0 1-0 Pens

PREMIER LEAGUE FIXTURES

Round 12

Sunday April 19

Moorabbin City v Fawkner Blues - Kingston Heath Soccer Complex - kick off 3.00pm
Thomastown Zebras v Preston Lions - Partridge Reserve - kick off 3.00pm

Monday April 20

Bulleen Inter Kings v South Dandenong - Veneto Club - kick off 8.30pm
Altona Magic v Sunshine Georgies - Paisley Park - kick off 8.30pm
Heidelberg United v St Albans Saints - Olympic Village - kick off 8.30pm

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By Graham Cooke

LITTLE BROTHER SPREADS WINGS

ACT fans can be forgiven for thinking the Gagetti brothers are inseparable.

From the days when Joe was the bright young player in Monaro's struggling National League squad and Paul a gangling junior seeking to establish himself in the youth team, the two have seemed to follow each other around.

Monaro, Canberra Metros, Juventus, Belconnen ... they were a double act, Paul slotting into the stopper role and Joe sweeping at the back.

This year, it's different. Joe is back where he began, at Monaro, and Paul is at Canberra Deakin. For the first time they will be opponents. And no brotherly love out on the paddock.

"This is the best possible thing for both of us," Joe says. "I don't think it's a case of Paul coming out from under my shadow. He's a good player in his own right and people recognise him as such.

"But being in a different club, he can now take on that little extra bit of responsibility which he was always capable of doing, but usually left to me.

"I've always been playing behind him, so it's natural to shout advice and instructions. Now someone else will be doing that, and he'll have to make up his own mind.

"This could be a big year for him."

Certainly Paul was one of the few players who fired in a Canberra Deakin side surprisingly eliminated from the Federation Cup by Queanbeyan City. On that showing he is going to need all the leadership abilities he has learnt from his brother over the years.

Joe (33) has his own challenges at Monaro – helping to mould a team of champions into a champion team.

"I know this was said about Monaro last year, but on paper we have the best team in the league," he noted.

"It might have looked that way in 1997, but in fact there was very little once you got past the first 13. That lack of depth when the injuries and suspension began to bite and cost the club a place in the play-offs.

"That's different now, and no-one is going to get a walk-up start. Every player is fighting for his position."

Gagetti predicts a two-horse race for the premiership between Monaro and Belconnen United.

"United is the one team which worries me a bit," he said.

"They rarely let their opponents off with an easy game."

The matches between these two powerhouse sides should be well worth seeing.

Joe Gagetti (Monaro).

ROCKETS BLAST OFF

The Canberra Rockets blasted off under new coach Ian Heywood with a 6-2 win over Shanghai Xu Fang at the Australian Institute of Sport on Thursday night.

It was a game which marked the end of one era and the beginning of another in more ways than one. Heywood, who took the job saying he wanted nothing less than total commitment from the squad, sacked several long-standing representatives, including last season's Premier League top scorer, Steve Lazzari.

Also missing from the Rockets' line-up was Steve's brother, Martin, plus Steve Vanzetti.

In came youngsters Simon Agnello, Steven Lee and Brent Chick — all appeared in the second-half with Chick looking especially threatening as he ran at a tiring Chinese defence.

Xu Fang, drawn from a group of real estate and construction companies in the Shanghai area, matched the Rockets at first, twice coming from behind to draw level.

After a fine drive from Gabbi Exposito on the hour gave the Rockets a 3-2 lead, the visitors wilted dramatically, and from then on it was a case of how many Canberra would score.

They were many positives in the game for Heywood to ponder: The impressive debut of the young brigade; the bustling intensity of George Cattanach, who will take on the main striker's role now Lazzari has gone, and the skill and high work rate of wide midfielder Johnny Rakic.

He was unhappy afterwards that both Xu Fang goals came from defensive errors, but must have been pleased how his team stayed out of the battle many of Xu Fang's players seemed to be having with referee Ben Williams.

Williams, struggling desperately to preserve the spirit of what was, after all a friendly international, was lenient in the extreme with a visiting team which argued and niggled its way through the game, especially when the tide began to turn against it.

Scorers for the Rockets were: Cattanach (2), Exposito, Craig Rankine, Rakic and Njegosh Popovich.

Wang Xiazhong and Ding Yongjun netted for Xu Fang.

Ian Heywood (Rockets and Monaro coach).

BELS TRY AGAIN

It's never easy to begin all over again, but that is just the task which Belconnen United coach Lino Fiorese has set himself.

From about the mid-point of last season, the Premier League title had seemed in Belconnen's safe keeping, but a narrow loss to Olympic followed by an inexplicable collapse of form against Canberra Deakin, saw it eliminated from the finals.

It's in keeping with the Belconnen tradition that no-one has panicked, with Fiorese still firmly in charge and minimum changes.

Tony Pangallo has transferred to Queanbeyan City – a move the coach says is bad for Belconnen and ultimately for the player. "I honestly believe it is against Tony's long term interests, but Belconnen never stands in the way of a player if he wants to go," he said.

"We've also lost our goalkeeper, Steve Bakas, although I'm not sure whether he has gone to another club, or just given up the game."

United will be relying on Blair Machin, from the ACT Academy's National Youth League squad, for the goalkeeping duties, while two other young players, Matt White and Craig Unwin, have been promoted to the senior squad.

"Matt was with us in the U/19s, and has come back after a season at Olympic," Fiorese said.

"Craig is one of those players out of the blue. He's put in the hard yards at training and deserves his place."

The club has also recruited Ray Junna, who coached Olympic last year, and will bring a wealth of experience to the centre of midfield.

When big defender Jason Dunn returns from injury, the squad will have a formidable look about it.

Fiorese says he is happy with the pre-season form. "We played a mix of sides from the ACT competition and met the AIS three times – it was a good build up," he added.

"But there's nothing like genuine competition and that starts in earnest with the opening premiership game against Canberra City this week."

Impatient for the off ... the head coach of the Capital City Suns, Bill Dojcinoski, and midfielder John Osti, on the sidelines for the first round of the ACT Federation Cup.

RASIC GETS COSMOS POST

After taking charge of Canberra Cosmos on a temporary basis following the departure of Branko Culina, former Socceroo team boss and coach of the year Rale Rasic has been given the job for the 1998-99 season.

The announcement was made at a press conference on Thursday, chairman Ian Knop saying it was the unanimous decision of the board to offer Rasic the job of guiding Canberra from the bottom of the table.

The coach immediately took up the challenge. "I told Mr Knop when I first arrived here that having got me to Canberra, it would be hard to make me go," he said.

"I love this city and believe I can take the Cosmos to a place in the top six. That will certainly be my first aim."

In taking on what many would consider the most difficult job in the Ericsson Cup, Rasic agreed he will have to curtail some of his many extensive business interests in Australia and the United States.

"I will be dedicating myself to the Cosmos," he said. "After all, what benefit is there to the reputation of a coach in taking over a team like Adelaide City which makes the finals and grand finals on a regular basis.

"Here I have a challenge which I relish."

NOVELL ACT PREMIER LEAGUE

Division 1 — Round 1
Sunday April 19

Beleconnen United	v	Canberra City	Hawker Oval
University of Canberra	v	Canberra Deakin	University Oval
Capital City Suns	v	Olympic	O'Connor Oval
Weston Creek	v	Queanbeyan City	Woden Park
Monaro	v	Gungahlin Juve	High Street

Under 23 — noon Firsts — 2pm

Division 2 — Round 2
Saturday April 18

Burns Club	v	Defence Academy	Kambah Oval No 2
Canberra Defence	v	White Eagles	RMC Oval
Cooma	v	Tuggeranong United	Nijong Oval

Under 23 — 1pm Firsts — 3pm

YOUNG ONES AID JUVENTUS

Problems always seem to come in twos at Gungahlin Juventus.

In 1996 it was brothers Paul and Danny Macor who moved on to Monaro, now Paul and Joe Gagetti have quit – Joe also to Monaro and Paul to Canberra Deakin.

With the highly talented Pino Seminara heading for Olympic, and a fairly undistinguished campaign in 1997, you might think the alarm bells would be ringing at the league's oldest club.

"Not a bit of it", says assistant coach Frank Cachia. "People tend to forget that we won the youth competition in 1995 and 1997," he notes.

"This clubs has some of the best young players in Canberra — we have seven in the ACT Academy squad – and we're filtering them into the first-team now.

"The oldest player we've got is out right back and captain, Tony Rinaudo. He's positively ancient at 25."

Cachia pointed out that apart from one game when it was beaten 3-1, all the club's losses last season were by the odd goal.

"We were close to being an extremely good side," he said.

"Perhaps this time we'll take the extra step."

Only time will tell for Juventus.

NSW STATE LEAGUES

JANIC NETS POINTS

By David Cooper

Bonnyrigg White Eagles captain Stefan Janic opened his account for the season, with the only goal in their clash with Bankstown City Lions at the Serbian Centre.

With the wet weather causing havoc to the Easter weekend fixtures on Friday and Saturday, it was a relief that at least one match could go ahead, albeit on a wet pitch. Janic who has spent a fair deal of time on the substitutes bench so far this season, showed just why he is considered one of the best strikers in the league with a clinical finish in the 66th minute.

He header powerfully past Bankstown keeper David Aceski after good work by Scott Zuereb and Javier Mancino who provided the final cross to Janic.

The win also moved Bonnyrigg to the head of the competition, with Canterbury's match against Ryde called off.

Despite the wet pitch both sides went at it right from the opening whistle, with the home side starting off strongly, Mark Hoenselaars seeing a header go over the bar after just two minutes of play.

Mladen Kos, Bonnyrigg's impressive young keeper of recent weeks, was thrust into the spotlight early, saving a free-kick from Mile Todoroski in the eighth minute.

Bankstown, who after a slow pre-season are starting to put some more consistent results together, were not sitting back and Steve Eagleton forced Kos into another save.

Bonnyrigg had the best chance to score in the first-half, when Janic fed David Harding but his shot was blocked.

After the break, Hoenselaars had a good chance to continue his good scoring of late, but shot straight into a grateful Aceski hands and then two minutes later headed over the bar from a good position.

Robert Gomez was narrowly wide with a shot in the 62nd minute as Bonnyrigg continued to attack the Bankstown goal.

Bankstown, in an attempt to force the pace, put Bobby Zafirov into attack but it was Bonnyrigg who were rewarded for their pressure with Janic's goal.

His goal could not have come at a better time after struggling to win a place in the attack, with Gomez and Hoenselaars taking up the two striking roles.

The goal sparked off some frenetic goalmouth action at both ends, with the Lions Robert Issa shooting high almost from the kick-off, while Paul Richardson headed over the bar for the home side minutes later.

Kos then made two superb saves in the space of five minutes to deny Todoroski what looked like a certain goal and one could sense a victory for the Eagles.

Bankstown threw everything at the Bonnyrigg goal but determined defence dented the Lions' hopes.

BONNYRIGG: Kos, Racker, Dragas, Richardson, Harding, Janic (Watton), Ghisso, Hoenselaars (Mancino), Xuereb, Gomez, Neilson (Vulic).

BANKSTOWN: Aceski, Hawrysiuk (K Josevski), Badrov, T Josevski,Luksic, Eagleton, Todoroski, Issa, Stajcic, Adioski (Bentvelzen), Velevski (Zafirov).

SUPER LEAGUE — ROUND 5
FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	DIF	PTS
Bonnyrigg WE	5	3	2	0	9	5	4	11
Canterbury Berries	4	3	1	0	7	3	4	10
Blacktown City	4	3	0	1	10	5	5	9
Eastern Suburbs	4	2	1	1	8	5	3	7
Leichhardt Tigers	4	2	1	1	8	6	2	7
Bankstown City	5	2	1	2	8	6	2	6
Parramatta Eagles	4	2	0	2	7	6	1	6
Macarthur Rams	4	2	0	2	6	7	-1	6
Sutherland Shire	5	1	2	2	3	4	-1	5
Central Coast	4	1	1	2	3	3	0	4
Ryde City Gunners	5	0	1	4	3	12	-9	1
St George Saints	4	0	0	4	3	13	-10	0

SUPER LEAGUE LEADING GOALSCORERS

5 John Buonavoglia (Leichhardt)

4 Saso Petrovski (Parramatta)

3 Eric Williams (Macarthur)

3 Jim Nikas (Canterbury)

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 5

	1ST	U/21	U/18
Leichhardt Tigers v Blacktown City	P	P	P
Ryde City Gunners v Canterbury Berries	P	P	P
Eastern Suburbs v Sutherland Sharks	P	P	P
St George Saints v Macarthur Rams	P	P	P
Bonnyrigg WE v Bankstown City Lions	1-0	P	P
S Janic 66			
Parramatta Eagles v Central Cost	P	P	P

ROUND 6

Sutherland Sharks v Ryde City	1-1	1-2	0-2
G Bard 33rd S Boudater 7th			

DIVISION TWO ROUND 6

Liverpool City	0	Hajduk Wanderers	2
		M Marvello 39, B Voloder 80	
Alexander Warriors	1	Hurstville ZSC	4
M Sarikakis 28		B Simunic 72, R Babaic 77, I Elek 81, I Pavlic 86	
Greystanes	1	Uni of NSW	0
A Kidd 82			
Gladesville United	1	Dulwich Hill	5
A Prentzas 55		D Fernandes 32, A Dos Santos 64, 65, 78, J Sherry 83	
Arncilffe Scots	P	Sydney District	P
Mt Druitt Town Rangers	1	Parramatta City	1
P Graham		T Lakos	

DIVISION ONE ROUND 8

	1ST	U/21	U/18
Fairfield Bulls v Moorebank Sports	P	P	P
Stanmore Hawks v Bathurst '75	P	P	P
Mt Pritchard v Belmore Hercules	P	P	P
Rockdale City Suns v AC United	P	P	P
Illawara Lions v Auburn United	0-1	P	P
T Caruso 65th			
Hills United v Penrith Panthers	P	P	P
Hurstville City v Manly Warringah	P	P	P

DUE TO THE UNSEASONALLY INCLEMENT WEATHER, MOST GAMES WERE WASHED OUT.

NSW Soccer Federation

SUPER LEAGUE
ROUND 7

Saturday 18th April
Blacktown City v Macarthur Rams
Gabbie Stadium — 6.00pm
Bonnyrigg WE v Sutherland Shire
Serbian Centre — 6.00pm

Sunday 19th April
Parramatta Eagles v Canterbury Berries
Melita Stadium — 3.00pm
St George Saints v Bankstown City
St George Stadium — 3.00pm
Leichhardt Tigers v Central Coast
Lambert Park — 3.00pm
Eastern Suburbs v Ryde City Gunners
Wentworth Park — 3.00pm

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Around the Globe

ENGLAND

PREMIER LEAGUE

Arsenal	3	**Newcastle Utd**	1
Anelka 41,64		Barton 79	
Vieira 72			
Barnsley	2	**Sheff Wed**	1
Ward 65		Stefanovic 86	
Fjortoft 72			
Bolton	2	**Blackburn**	1
Holdsworth 20		Duff 51	
Taylor 67			
Chelsea	2	**Tottenham H**	0
Flo 75			
Vialli 88			
Coventry	1	**Aston Villa**	2
Whelan 59		Yorke 5,48	
C Palace	0	**Leicester**	3
		Heskey 45,60	
		Elliott 74	
Everton	2	**Leeds Utd**	0
Hutchison 10			
Ferguson 38			
Soton	0	**Wimbledon**	1
		Leaburn 38	
West Ham	0	**Derby**	0
Man Utd	1	**Liverpool**	1
Johnsen 12		Owen 36	

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man U	34	12	3	2	38	8	8	4	5	26	17	67
Arsenal	31	12	2	2	33	10	6	7	2	19	17	63
L'pool	32	10	2	4	31	15	5	8	3	24	20	55
Chelsea	33	10	2	3	30	12	7	1	10	33	26	54
Leeds	34	9	3	5	27	17	7	3	7	23	20	54
B'burn	32	10	3	3	38	22	4	6	6	15	22	51
West Ham	32	11	4	1	32	10	3	2	11	12	30	48
A Villa	34	8	3	6	24	21	6	3	8	18	22	48
Derby	32	10	3	3	28	14	3	4	9	16	27	46
Leicester	32	5	8	3	17	12	6	3	7	22	21	44
Coventry	32	7	7	2	23	16	4	4	8	15	22	44
Soton	33	10	1	6	27	19	3	3	10	14	26	43
Wimbledon	32	5	5	7	16	19	5	5	5	15	15	40
Sheff Wed	33	9	4	4	28	22	2	3	11	19	38	40
Everton	33	7	3	6	22	22	2	7	8	16	25	37
Newcastle	32	6	5	6	17	18	3	4	8	12	20	36
Tottenham	33	6	6	4	19	20	3	2	12	14	31	35
Bolton	33	6	8	3	18	17	1	5	10	13	32	34
Barnsley	33	7	3	6	24	30	3	1	13	11	44	34
C Palace	32	0	4	11	8	32	6	4	7	19	25	26

DIVISION ONE

Birmingham	1	Port Vale	1
Bradford City	0	Notts Forest	3
Huddersfield	2	Crewe	0
Ipswich	0	Tranmere	0
Middlesbrough	4	Bury	0
Oxford Utd	2	Swindon T	1
Sheff Utd	2	Norwich	2
Stockport	2	WBA	1
Stoke City	2	Portsmouth	1
Wolves	2	Man City	2
Charlton	3	Reading	0
Sunderland	2	QPR	2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
N Forest	42	16	2	3	48	20	10	6	5	27	19	86
Sun'land	41	12	7	2	44	21	11	4	5	32	22	80
Charlton	42	15	5	1	45	17	8	4	9	31	32	78
Midboro	41	15	3	2	45	10	8	6	7	24	29	78
Sheff Utd	40	15	5	1	39	16	3	10	6	20	27	69
Ipswich	41	11	5	4	37	17	7	9	5	28	23	68
B'gham	42	9	7	5	24	15	7	9	5	30	20	64
Wolves	41	12	6	3	36	20	5	4	11	13	22	61
Stockport	42	13	5	3	43	19	4	2	15	21	42	58
Oxford	42	12	5	4	35	17	4	3	14	22	39	56
Bradford	42	10	8	3	24	19	4	6	11	20	29	56
WBA	42	9	6	6	23	22	6	5	10	19	27	56
Swindon	42	9	5	7	26	22	5	4	12	14	40	51
Hud'sfield	42	8	5	8	27	24	5	6	10	22	36	50
Crewe	41	7	2	11	21	33	8	3	10	25	26	50
Tranmere	41	7	7	6	26	22	5	5	11	19	28	48
Port Vale	42	7	6	8	25	22	5	4	12	26	37	46
QPR	42	8	8	5	27	19	2	8	11	20	39	46
Norwich	42	7	8	6	22	27	4	5	12	19	40	46
Bury	42	6	10	5	20	21	3	9	9	19	33	46
Man City	42	6	5	10	26	23	5	6	10	23	28	44
P'mouth	42	7	6	8	25	29	4	4	13	20	31	43
Stoke	42	7	5	9	26	35	3	8	10	14	29	43
Reading	42	8	4	9	27	29	3	5	13	11	43	42

DIVISION TWO

Brentford	0	Fulham	2
Burnley	1	Bristol C	0
Carlisle U	3	Oldham	1
Chesterfield	2	Northampton	1
Gillingham	2	Luton Town	1
Plymouth	3	Blackpool	1
Preston	1	Southend	0
Walsall	2	Millwall	0
Watford	1	Wrexham	0
York City	0	Bournemouth	1
Bristol R	5	Wigan	0
Wycombe	1	Grimsby	1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bristol C	42	15	4	2	38	15	9	5	7	27	19	81
Watford	42	12	6	3	34	21	10	8	3	28	17	80
Grimsby	42	11	7	3	29	10	7	7	7	24	23	68
Fulham	42	11	7	3	25	12	8	3	10	28	26	67
Wrexham	42	10	9	2	30	21	7	5	9	20	26	65
Gillingham	42	13	5	3	29	17	5	5	11	21	29	64
North'ton	42	13	4	4	30	15	3	11	7	16	19	63
Bristol R	42	11	2	8	39	31	6	8	7	25	29	61
Ches'field	42	12	6	3	29	18	3	9	9	14	21	60
Blackpool	42	12	6	3	33	22	4	3	14	20	39	57
B'mouth	42	9	8	4	25	14	6	4	11	26	34	57
Oldham	41	12	6	2	38	19	1	8	12	17	31	53
Preston	42	9	5	7	24	22	5	6	10	25	28	53
Walsall	41	10	7	4	26	15	4	4	12	16	31	53
Wycombe	42	10	8	3	31	19	2	8	11	17	33	52
Millwall	42	7	7	7	21	20	7	3	11	20	31	52
Wigan	41	10	4	6	34	30	4	5	12	21	35	51
York	42	9	5	7	25	20	3	10	8	22	35	51
Luton	42	5	7	9	29	36	7	7	7	22	22	50
Plymouth	42	10	5	6	35	26	2	7	12	17	37	48
Brentford	42	9	6	6	31	25	1	10	10	14	39	46
Burnley	41	8	9	4	30	21	3	3	14	16	32	45
Carlisle	42	8	5	8	26	25	4	3	14	28	37	44
Southend	42	8	6	7	28	27	3	2	16	17	46	41

DIVISION THREE

Barnet	2	Leyton O	2
Cambridge	1	Peterborough	0
Cardiff	0	Colchester	2
Chester	2	Doncaster	1
Hull City	2	Hartlepool	1
Lincoln	P	Exeter City	P
Mansfield	2	Torquay	2
Notts Cty	2	Brighton	2
Rochdale	4	Scarborough	0
Rotherham	1	Swansea	1
Scunthorpe	1	Macclesfield	0
Shrewsbury	3	Darlington	0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Notts Cty	42	12	7	2	33	18	14	4	3	37	20	89
Torquay	42	13	4	4	35	19	7	7	7	28	32	71
Macc'field	42	17	4	0	35	9	2	9	10	18	31	70
Barnet	42	10	7	4	34	20	9	5	7	25	25	69
Scarboro	42	14	4	3	44	23	5	7	9	21	33	68
Colchester	42	13	4	4	36	20	6	6	9	29	33	67
Lincoln	41	8	7	5	25	22	9	6	6	25	24	64
Peterboro	42	12	5	4	35	16	5	7	9	25	29	63
Leyton O	41	12	5	3	35	16	5	6	10	19	23	62
Roth'ham	42	9	8	4	36	28	5	10	6	22	25	60
Scunthorpe	41	9	7	5	27	23	7	4	9	24	27	59
Exeter	41	9	8	4	37	22	5	7	8	27	31	57
Mansfield	42	10	8	3	39	24	4	7	10	20	28	57
Chester	42	11	6	4	30	13	5	3	13	24	42	57
Cambridge	42	10	7	4	33	24	3	10	8	24	28	56
Shrewsbury	42	11	3	7	33	25	3	9	9	23	32	54
Hartlepool	42	9	11	1	37	21	2	9	10	19	29	53
Rochdale	42	13	3	5	38	14	2	3	16	11	35	51
Darlington	42	12	5	4	40	26	1	5	15	13	43	49
Cardiff	42	5	12	4	26	20	4	10	7	21	26	49
Swansea	42	7	7	7	21	16	5	3	13	24	41	46
Hull	42	8	6	7	32	30	1	1	19	15	45	34
Brighton	42	3	8	10	18	31	3	7	11	15	28	33
Doncaster	42	3	3	15	13	45	1	4	16	16	62	19

SCOTLAND

PREMIER LEAGUE

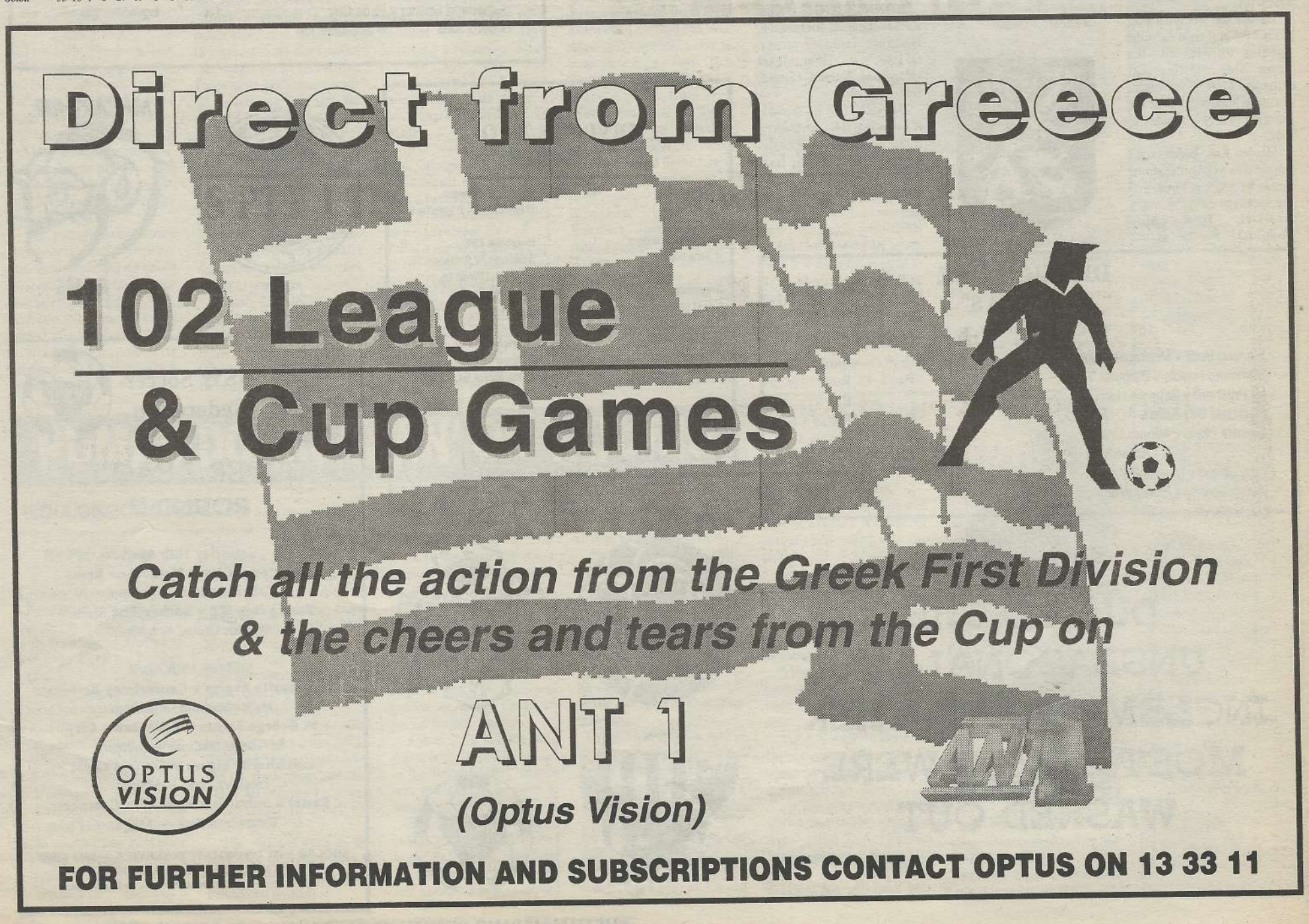
Dundee Utd	0	**Aberdeen**	0
Hibernian	2	**Hearts**	1
Lavety 56		Robertson 71	
Harper 80			
Motherwell	1	**Kilmarnock**	1
Lindqvist 80		Holt 28	
St Johnstone	0	**Dunfermline**	0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Celtic	31	10	3	2	35	8	10	3	3	22	12	66
Rangers	31	12	4	0	44	15	6	5	4	25	20	63
Hearts	32	9	4	2	33	20	9	4	4	32	20	62
St J'stone	32	6	5	6	17	19	5	3	7	15	18	41
K'marnock	32	7	3	5	20	19	3	7	7	15	31	40
Dundee U	32	5	7	4	22	14	2	6	8	18	31	34
Mot'well	32	6	4	6	24	23	3	3	10	17	29	34
Aberdeen	32	5	5	6	17	16	2	6	8	16	32	32
Dunf'line	32	4	7	5	24	28	3	4	9	14	35	32
Hibernian	32	6	4	7	25	22	0	5	10	10	33	27

DIVISION ONE

Ayr United	2	Hamilton	1
Falkirk	1	Stirling	0
Morton	2	St Mirren	0
Partick	2	Airdrie	0
Raith R	1	Dundee	1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dundee	32	8	5	3	19	8	12	4	0	32	10	69
Falkirk	32	8	4	4	25	18	8	4	4	25	20	56
Raith	32	8	5	3	23	10	7	4	5	24	20	54
Airdrie	32	8	5	3	22	16	5	6	5	16	18	50
Morton	32	6	4	6	20	21	4	5	7	22	25	39
Hamilton	32	4	6	6	16	23	5	4	7	25	26	37
St Mirren	32	6	3	6	21	21	3	5	9	18	29	35
Ayr	32	6	4	7	26	26	2	5	8	8	25	33
Stirling	32	3	7	6	20	29	4	3	9	19	24	31
Partick	32	3	4	9	25	32	3	7	6	15	20	29



Around the Globe

SCOTLAND

DIVISION TWO Cont.

Brechin	1	Stranraer	3
Clyde	0	East Fife	0
Clydebank	0	Forfar	1
Cal Thistle	2	Stenhousemuir	1
Queen Sth	0	Livingston	1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Livingston	32	8	4	3	29	18	7	6	4	24	17	55
Clydebank	32	7	5	5	20	16	7	6	2	19	11	53
Stranraer	32	8	3	5	33	21	7	4	5	21	19	52
East Fife	32	7	2	6	27	30	6	4	7	21	23	45
Queen Sth	32	7	5	4	21	17	5	3	8	28	29	44
Forfar	32	6	4	6	26	25	5	5	6	21	30	42
Cal Thistle	32	6	7	4	29	21	4	3	8	30	26	40
Sten'muir	32	6	5	5	23	22	4	3	9	17	25	38
Clyde	32	5	5	6	19	22	3	6	7	17	29	35
Brechin	32	5	5	6	20	25	2	5	9	19	38	31

DIVISION THREE

Albion Rovers	1	Ross County	3
Alloa	3	Dumbarton	0
Arbroath	1	Berwick	0
Cowdenbeath	0	Montrose	0
Queen's Park	0	East Stirling	2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Alloa	32	11	1	4	36	17	9	3	4	30	19	64
Arbroath	31	10	4	2	36	17	8	2	5	23	17	60
Ross Cty	32	7	4	4	34	18	8	6	3	26	16	55
E Stirling	32	10	2	4	27	14	6	3	7	16	22	53
Albion	30	7	3	4	25	19	4	2	10	23	41	38
Queen's Pk	32	5	3	9	20	29	4	6	5	17	18	36
Berwick	31	4	7	5	21	23	4	4	7	17	22	35
Montrose	32	4	4	8	23	31	5	4	7	24	37	35
Cow'beath	32	6	2	9	14	23	5	0	10	14	26	35
D'barton	32	1	5	9	12	24	5	5	7	25	30	28

BELGIUM

Lokeren	1	Club Bruges	1
Mouscron	1	Harelbeke	0
Standard Liege	1	Beveren	2
Genk	1	Antwerp	1
Lierse	1	Molenbeek	1
Ghent	0	Eendracht Aalst	0
Ekeren	1	Sint-Truiden	0

CROATIA

The regular 12-club championship is now split in two. The six clubs in Group A play-off for the championship, the sides in group B play to stay in the premier league.

Note: Points totals include half of those won during the regular season.

Zagreb	4	Zadarkomerc	0
Hrv.Dragovoljac	1	Hajduk	0
Osijek	1	Croatia	1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Croatia	5	4	1	0	16	5	38
Hajduk	5	3	0	2	10	6	31
Zagreb	5	1	1	3	9	8	25
Osijek	5	2	1	2	5	5	23
Hrv.Dragovoljac	5	1	2	2	3	8	23
Zadarkomerc	5	1	1	3	5	16	18

Group B

Mladost 127	2	Varteks	1
Slaven Belupo	2	Sibenik	1
Samobor	3	Rijeka	1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Slaven	5	3	0	2	4	5	21
Rijeka	5	2	1	2	8	7	20
Sibenik	5	3	1	1	8	2	19
Mladost	5	2	0	3	6	6	18
Varteks	5	2	0	2	4	8	18
Samobor	5	2	0	3	6	8	17

CZECH REP

Viktoria Zizkov	1	Bohdanec	0
Sparta Prague	4	Petra Drnovice	0
Sigma Olomouc	0	Banik Ostrava	0
Hradec Kralove	1	Boby Brno	1
Jablonec	2	Kaucuk Opava	2
Teplice	3	Slavia Prague	1
Slovan Liberec	0	Viktoria Plzen	0
Ceske Budejovice	0	Dukla Prague	0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sparta Prague	23	17	4	2	40	14	55
Slavia Prague	23	12	6	5	34	19	42
Sigma Olomouc	23	11	5	7	27	18	38
Banik Ostrava	23	9	10	4	34	26	37
Jablonec	23	9	8	6	34	25	35
Viktoria Zizkov	23	10	5	8	22	19	35
Slovan Liberec	23	9	7	7	28	27	34
Boby Brno	23	9	5	9	32	29	32
Teplice	23	7	8	8	26	21	29
Kaucuk Opava	23	7	8	8	28	30	29
Dukla Prague	23	8	5	10	29	34	29
Petra Drnovice	23	7	6	10	28	38	27
Viktoria Plzen	23	7	5	11	29	33	26
Hradec Kralove	23	6	7	10	18	27	25
Ceske Budejovice	23	6	5	12	22	37	23
Bohdanec	23	2	2	19	13	47	8

GERMANY

Cologne	0	Karlsruhe	1
Schalke	3	Stuttgart	4
Wolfsburg	1	Bayer Leverkusen	0
Hamburg	2	Arminia Bielefeld	0
Bayern Munich	3	1860 Munich	1
Hertha Berlin	0	Werder Bremen	2
Kaiserslautern	1	Borussia Dortmund	1
Bochum	1	Hansa Rostock	3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kaiserslautern	29	17	8	4	51	32	59
Bayern Mun	30	17	7	6	59	32	58
Leverkusen	29	13	11	5	56	32	50
Hansa Rostock	30	13	7	10	45	36	46
Schalke 04	29	11	12	6	35	29	45
Stuttgart	30	12	9	9	49	44	45
Werder Bre	30	11	8	11	38	46	41
B Dortmund	29	10	9	10	50	45	39
Hertha Berlin	29	11	6	12	36	44	39
Wolfsburg	30	11	5	14	35	42	38
Hamburg	30	9	10	11	35	40	37
Duisburg	29	9	9	11	35	40	36
Cologne	29	10	5	14	44	53	35
Bochum	29	9	7	13	35	42	34
Karlsruhe	30	8	9	13	39	51	33
1860 Munich	30	8	8	14	36	50	32
B M'gladbach	29	6	11	12	43	50	29
Arminia B	29	7	5	17	33	46	26

GREECE

Athinaikos	0	Kalamata	0
Iraklis	1	Ionikos	1
Veria	3	OFI	0
Olympiakos	4	Paniliakos	2
Panakaiki	2	Xanthi	1
Proodeftiki	1	Panionios	1
Apollon	4	PAOK	4
Ethnikos	1	AEK	3
Kavala	0	Panathinaikos	4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olympiakos	30	26	1	3	78	20	79
Panathinaikos	30	24	1	5	79	24	73
AEK	30	20	6	4	53	26	66
PAOK	30	18	7	5	62	38	60
Ionikos	30	17	7	6	42	24	58
Iraklis	30	13	8	9	44	39	47
Xanthi	30	11	6	13	45	49	39
OFI	30	12	3	15	38	52	39
Veria	30	11	6	13	35	38	39
Apollon	30	10	6	14	31	39	36
Paniliakos	30	9	8	13	41	44	35
Panionios	30	9	5	16	35	48	32
Panahaiki	30	9	4	17	26	50	31
Proodeftiki	30	7	6	17	30	55	27
Kalamata	30	6	8	16	23	41	26
Athinaikos	30	6	8	16	22	44	26
Ethnikos	30	7	3	20	24	48	24
Kavala	30	6	5	19	28	57	23

HOLLAND

Sparta	3	PSV	1
Waalwijk	3	Feyenoord	2
Nijmegen	2	Fortuna Sittard	2
Roda	2	Twente Enschede	0
Ajax	7	Heerenveen	2
Vitesse	4	Graafschap	1
NAC Breda	2	Utrecht	1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ajax	29	26	2	1	93	14	80
PSV	29	18	8	3	74	35	62
Vitesse	29	16	7	6	72	44	55
Feyenoord	29	16	6	7	54	32	54
Heerenveen	29	15	6	8	47	43	51
Willem II	29	14	4	11	51	45	46
Fortuna	29	12	5	12	40	46	41
NAC Breda	29	11	6	12	34	36	39
Sparta	30	9	10	11	48	53	37
Twente	30	9	9	12	33	38	36
Utrecht	30	11	3	16	52	51	36
Graafschap	30	9	8	13	40	39	35
Nijmegen	30	11	2	17	35	56	35
Roda JC	30	8	8	14	37	40	32
Waalwijk	31	8	6	17	44	63	30
Maastricht	29	8	4	17	29	63	28
Groningen	30	6	10	14	36	53	28
Volendam	30	4	6	20	27	85	18

Ajax Amsterdam have won the championship

ITALY

Brescia	1	Lazio	1
Fiorentina	1	Vicenza	1
Juventus	2	Piacenza	0
Lecce	1	Bologna	1
AC Milan	3	Atalanta	0
Parma	3	Napoli	1
AS Roma	1	Inter	2
Sampdoria	3	Empoli	0
Udinese	2	Bari	0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Juventus	29	18	9	2	61	25	63
Inter	29	19	5	5	55	23	62
Lazio	29	16	8	5	49	19	56
Udinese	29	15	7	7	51	34	52
Roma	29	13	10	6	50	35	49
Parma	29	13	10	6	47	32	49
Fiorentina	29	12	12	5	54	31	48
Milan	29	11	9	9	36	32	42
Sampdoria	29	11	7	11	45	50	40
Bologna	29	9	11	9	43	39	38
Vicenza	29	8	7	14	31	54	31
Empoli	29	8	6	15	39	48	30
Bari	29	8	6	15	25	40	30
Brescia	29	7	8	14	38	48	29
Piacenza	29	5	14	10	20	33	29
Atalanta	29	5	10	14	21	43	25
Lecce	29	5	7	17	28	61	22
Napoli	29	2	6	21	21	67	12

PORTUGAL

Maritimo	1	Boavista	0
Belenenses	2	Academica	0
Vitoria Setubal	1	Rio Ave	0
Leca	0	Braga	0
Estrela Amadora	2	Farense	1
Porto	3	Chaves	1
Varzim	1	Vitoria Guimaraes	2
Campomaiorense	3	Sporting Lisbon	5

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Porto	29	21	5	3	62	28	68
Benfica	28	16	7	5	47	25	55
Guimaraes	29	14	7	8	36	21	49
Sporting	29	13	9	7	39	27	48
Estrela	29	13	8	8	39	32	47
Maritimo	29	13	8	8	33	26	47
Boavista	29	12	10	7	42	26	46
Salgueiros	28	10	9	9	36	31	39
Rio Ave	29	10	9	10	34	34	39
Leca	29	10	6	13	27	40	36
Cam'rense	29	9	7	13	43	49	34
Setubal	29	9	7	13	30	34	34
Braga	29	7	12	10	36	41	33
Academica	29	7	10	12	23	34	31
Farense	29	6	12	11	35	43	30
Varzim	29	6	10	13	25	41	28
Chaves	29	6	4	19	25	54	22
Belenenses	29	4	8	17	18	44	20

SPAIN

Athletic Bilbao	2	Valladolid	0
Compostela	1	Real Sociedad	3
Oviedo	0	Racing Santander	1
Salamanca	6	Valencia	0
Real Zaragoza	2	Mallorca	3
Atletico Madrid	3	Deportivo Coruna	0
Celta Vigo	2	Real Madrid	1
Merida	1	Barcelona	2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barcelona	33	22	4	7	72	43	70
Real Madrid	33	15	11	7	55	39	56
Real Sociedad	33	14	13	6	53	32	55
Mallorca	33	15	10	8	49	32	55
Celta Vigo	33	16	6	11	47	40	54
At Bilbao	33	14	12	7	45	41	54
At Madrid	33	13	11	9	67	48	50
Real Betis	32	14	8	10	41	41	50
Valencia	33	14	6	13	48	41	48
Espanyol	32	10	13	9	37	27	43
Valladolid	33	12	7	14	35	47	43
Deportivo	33	10	12	11	36	37	42
Zaragoza	33	10	11	12	41	51	41
Salamanca	33	10	8	15	37	41	38
Santander	33	10	8	15	41	51	38
Oviedo	33	8	13	12	32	40	37
Merida	33	9	9	15	31	47	36
Compostela	33	8	10	15	43	58	34
Tenerife	32	8	10	14	33	49	34
Gijon	32	2	6	24	26	64	12

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Weird & Wonderful

By Stuart Jones

1962-63

Everton took the First Division title back to the river Mersey in 1963 thanks to a terrific season that saw them undefeated at home and lose only six times all season.

Led by such players as Scottish international inside-forward Alex Young, the side finished six points clear of Spurs, who finished in the top three for the fourth year in a row. In third place were Burnley, who had finished in the top four over the same period. Tottenham's drive to the top of the table was thanks mainly to Jimmy Greaves' 37 goals, the record for Division One for the season and the most any player scored throughout the football league that year. They also became the first British club to pick up a European trophy by defeating Atletico Madrid 5-1 in the Final of the European Cup Winners Cup.

At the bottom Leyton Orient's stay at the top was ever so brief as they won only six games and were relegated. Ten points ahead of them were Manchester City, however they too were relegated ending up in second last place. Their great rivals, United, were just three points, but two places, ahead of them. Ipswich Town's title defence was a disaster as they crashed, finishing just four points off the relegation zone.

Dennis Viollet led Stoke back to Division One after taking them to the championship in Division Two. They finished a point ahead of also promoted Chelsea, who had Bobby Tambling score 35 of their 81 goals. It was close, as Sunderland lost out on goal average to the London club for the final promotion spot. Stoke had already won the championship so their final day loss to Southampton did not cause any undue harm.

Sunderland had looked good for second spot, needing to play Chelsea in their last game at home, but they lost that game 0-1 and the Chelsea 'Pensioners' then went on to win their final game at home 7-0 (against Portsmouth), thereby tipping out the unlucky Roker lads' promotion hopes for another year.

At the bottom Luton finished last with Walsall also relegated. Charlton played them on the final day, at Walsall, with a win for the London team the only method of survival: they did just that with a 2-1 victory.

Northampton meanwhile won the Third Division with second placed Swindon also winning promotion. At the bottom Halifax, Carlisle, and Brighton were all clearly relegated. The other position was closer with five teams battling for survival. Bradford finished their campaign on May 11 and had to have results go their way to stay up. Whilst all their rivals did lose their final games it was not by enough, consequently they lost out on goal average to Reading, with Bristol Rovers and Barnsley a point ahead, and Watford a further two.

Brentford won elevation as champions of the Fourth Division, with second placed Oldham and third placed Crewe also moving up. Fourth placed Mansfield picked up three points in their final two games to see out Gillingham on goal average and Torquay by a point. New boys Oxford United, who had replaced Accrington Stanley, finished in 18th place. Firmly bottom were Hartlepools United on just 25 points.

With the League Cup gaining more respect, midland rivals Birmingham and Aston Villa made the final. The first-leg saw City victorious by 3-1 and, with a 0-0 draw at Villa Park in the second-leg, it was Birmingham City who took home the League Cup. An aggregate crowd of over 69,000 saw the two legs.

Leicester City defeated Liverpool 1-0 and Manchester United over Southampton by the same score in the FA Cup Semi-Finals.

Leicester would be returning to Wembley where they had yet to win a game. Over 100,000 were present as United's Scottish genius Denis Law poached a first-half goal separating the two sides at half-time. In the second-half good lead up work by Giles and Charlton saw David Herd score. With ten minutes to go McLintock put in a low cross which was headed home magnificently by Keyworth to put City back in the match.

However, five minutes later Gordon Banks came out for a cross and missed it, giving David Herd a chance to put the game beyond reach, and he dutifuly converted the chance at the far post.

The most expensive team up to that time to play a Cup Final came through, and all that just a week after avoiding relegation. Manchester United took home the FA Cup once more.

The two Cambridge teams dominated the Southern League as City won the Premier Division, and United came second. Poole, Gravesend, and Clacton Town were all relegated, to be replaced by Margate — champions of Division One — Hinckley, Hastings, and Nuneaton Borough.

Worcester were saved from relegation thanks to the decision to expand to 22 teams in the Premier League the following season. Gravesend even tried full-time players, but ended in relegation mire, not the hoped glory.

Tunbridge Wells United, having conceded 118 goals along the way, finished bottom of the whole Southern League set-up. This season also saw Chelmsford being banned from applying for Football League status for five years when they exploited a rule to pick up a Wolves player, Bobby Mason, for no fee.

Many clubs suffered financially as the big freeze hit home, that same cold winter being the cause of all the league seasons, throughout the country, finishing relatively late.

The Southern League Cup went to Guildford City who saw off the challenge of First Division Nuneaton 2-1 over the two legs.

Scottish champions were Rangers, who finished nine points clear of Kilmarnock. Partick finished a creditable third with Celtic fourth. At the bottom Clyde were relegated with Raith Rovers. In fact Rovers collected just nine points all season, with only two wins (one loss ended 10-0 to Aberdeen!). They conceded 118 goals in just 34 games and only scored 35 — their suffering supporters did not see a win at home all season.

Division Two champions were St Johnstone, who won promotion at the first attempt. Up also went second placed East Stirling, who finished one point ahead of Morton, whose 6-0 win over Montrose on the final day was not enough.

Brechin City finished bottom, collecting just nine points, but gaining three wins and conceding 113 goals in 36 games.

League Cup champions were Hearts, who defeated Kilmarnock in the Final on October 27th by a solitary goal.

Celtic defeated Raith 5-2 in the SFA semis, and, coincidentally, Rangers won by exactly the same scoreline over Dundee United.

The first Final resulted in a 1-1 draw, whilst the replay at Hampden Park eleven days later went to Rangers by 3-0.

Incredibly, Rangers had picked up the 'Double' once more.

Around Europe the Champions were:

Austria: FK Austria (Cup double)
Belgium: RSC Anderlecht
Bulgaria: CDNA Sofia (Cup - Slavia Sofia)
France: AS Monaco (Cup double)
East Germany: Motor Jena (Cup - Motoe Zwickau)
West Germany: Borussia Dortmund (Cup - Hamburger SV)
Holland: PSV Eindhoven (Cup - Willem II Tilburg)
Italy: FC Internazionale (Cup - Atalanta BC)
Poland: Gornik Zabrze (Cup - Zaglebie Sosnowiec)
Portugal: Benfica (Cup - Sporting CP)
Romania: Dinamo Bucuresti (Cup - Petrolul Ploiesti)
Russia: Dynamo Moskva (Cup - Spartak Moskva)
Spain: Real Madrid CF (Cup - CF Barcelona)
Sweden: IFK Norrkoping
Switzerland: FC Zurich (Cup - FC Basel)

European Champions — Milan
Cup Winners Cup — Tottenham Hotspur
Fairs Cup — Valencia

ENGLAND

DIVISION 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Everton	42	14	7	0	48	17	11	4	6	36	25	61
Tott'ham H	42	14	6	1	72	28	9	3	9	39	34	55
Burnley	42	14	4	3	41	17	8	6	7	37	40	54
Leicester C	42	14	6	1	53	23	6	6	9	26	30	52
Wolves	42	11	6	4	51	25	9	4	8	42	40	50
Sheffield W	42	10	5	6	38	26	9	5	7	39	37	48
Arsenal	42	11	4	6	44	33	7	6	8	42	44	46
Liverpool	42	13	3	5	45	22	4	7	10	26	37	44
Nott'ham F	42	12	4	5	39	28	5	6	10	28	41	44
Sheffield U	42	11	7	3	33	20	5	6	11	25	40	41
Bl'burn R	42	11	4	6	55	34	4	8	9	24	37	42
W Ham U	42	8	6	7	39	34	6	6	9	34	35	40
Blackpool	42	8	7	6	34	27	5	7	9	24	37	40
WBA	42	11	1	9	40	37	5	6	10	31	42	39
Aston Villa	42	12	2	7	38	23	3	6	12	24	45	38
Fulham	42	8	6	7	28	30	6	4	11	22	41	38
Ipswich	42	5	8	8	34	39	7	3	11	25	39	35
Bolton W	42	13	3	5	35	18	2	2	17	20	57	35
Man. U	42	6	6	9	36	38	6	4	11	31	43	34
Bir'ham C	42	6	8	7	40	40	4	5	12	23	50	33
Man. C	42	7	5	9	30	45	3	6	12	28	57	31
Leyton O	42	4	5	12	22	37	2	4	15	15	44	21

DIVISION 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Stoke C	42	15	3	3	49	20	5	10	6	24	30	53
Chelsea	42	15	3	3	54	16	9	1	11	27	26	52
Sunderland	42	14	5	2	46	13	6	7	8	38	42	52
M'brough	42	12	4	5	48	35	8	5	8	38	50	49
Leeds U	42	15	2	4	55	19	4	8	9	24	34	48
Hud'field T	42	11	6	4	34	21	6	8	7	29	29	48
Newcastle U	42	11	6	4	28	20	7	5	9	23	27	47
S'thorpe U	42	12	7	2	35	18	4	5	12	22	41	44
Cardiff C	42	12	5	4	50	29	6	2	13	33	44	43
S'hampton	42	15	3	3	52	23	2	6	14	20	44	42
Plymouth A	42	13	4	4	48	24	2	8	11	28	49	42
Norwich C	42	11	6	4	53	33	6	2	13	27	46	42
R'ham U	42	11	3	7	34	30	6	3	12	33	44	40
Swansea T	42	13	5	3	33	17	2	4	15	18	55	39
Portsmouth	42	9	5	7	33	27	4	6	11	30	52	37
Preston NE	42	11	6	4	43	30	2	5	14	16	44	37
Derby Co	42	10	5	6	40	29	2	7	12	21	43	36
Grimsby T	42	8	6	7	34	26	3	7	11	21	40	35
Charlton A	42	8	4	9	33	38	5	1	15	29	56	31
Walsall	42	7	7	7	33	37	4	2	15	20	52	31
Luton T	42	10	4	7	45	40	1	3	17	16	44	29

DIVISION 3

Northampton T 62, Swindon T 58, Port Vale 54, Coventry C 53, Bournemouth 52, Peterboro'U 61, Notts Co 61, Southend U 50, Wrexham 49, Hull C 48, Crystal P 47, Colchester U 47, QPR 45, Bristol C 45, Shrewsbury T 44, Millwall 43, Watford 42, Barnsley 41, Bristol R 41, Reading 40, Bradford 40, Brighton & HA 36, Carlislo U 35, Halifax T 30.

DIVISION 4

Brentford 62, Oldham A 59, Crewe A 59, Mansfield T 57, Gillingham 57, Torquay U 56, Rockdale 51, Tranmere R 50, Barrow 50, Workington 47, Aldershot 47, Darlington 44, Southport 44, York C 43, Chesterfield 42, Doncaster R 42, Exeter C 42, Oxford U 41, Stockport Co 41, Newport Co 39, Chester 39, Lincoln C 35, Bradford C 32, Hartlepools U 25.

SCOTLAND

DIVISION 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rangers	34	25	7	2	94	28	57
Kilmarnock	34	20	8	6	92	40	48
Partick T	34	20	6	8	66	44	46
Celtic	34	19	6	9	76	44	44
Hearts	34	17	9	8	85	59	43
Aberdeen	34	17	7	10	70	47	41
Dundee U	34	15	11	8	67	52	41
Duntermline A	34	13	6	13	50	47	34
Dundee	34	12	9	13	60	49	33
Motherwell	34	10	11	13	60	63	31
Airdrie	34	14	2	18	52	76	30
St Mirren	34	10	8	16	52	72	28
Falkirk	34	12	3	19	54	69	27
T Lanark	34	9	8	17	56	68	26
Queen of South	34	10	6	18	36	75	26
Hibernian	34	8	9	17	47	67	25
Clyde	34	9	5	20	49	83	23
Raith R	34	2	5	27	35	118	9

DIVISION 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
St Johnstone	36	25	5	6	83	37	55
E Stirling	36	20	9	7	80	50	49
Morton	36	23	2	11	100	49	48
Hamilton A	36	18	6	10	69	56	44
Stranraer	36	16	10	10	81	70	42
Arbroath	36	18	4	14	74	51	40
Albion R	35	10	2	76	42	79	38
Cowdenbeath	36	15	7	14	72	61	37
Alloa	36	15	6	15	57	56	36
Stirling A	36	16	4	16	74	75	36
East Fife	36	15	6	15	60	69	36
Dumbarton	36	15	4	17	64	64	34
Ayr U	36	13	0	15	68	77	34
Queens Park	36	13	6	17	66	72	32
Montrose	36	13	5	18	57	70	31
Stenhousemuir	36	13	5	18	54	75	31
Berwick R	36	11	7	18	57	77	29
Forfar A	36	9	5	22	73	99	23
Brechin C	36	3	3	50	39	113	9

SOUTHERN LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION

Cambridge City 56, Cambridge United 52, Weymouth 51, Guildford City 51, Kettering Town 51, Wellington Town 47, Dartford 47, Chelmsford City 46, Bedford Town 46, Bath City 42, Yeovil Town 40, Romford 29, Bexleyheath & Welling 37, Hereford Utd 35, Merthyr Tydfil 34, Rugby Town 33, Wisbech Town 33, Worcester City 33, Poole Town 32, Gravesend & Northfleet 23, Clacton Town 13.

SOUTHERN LEAGUE DIVISION 1

Margate 55, Hinkley Athletic 53, Hastings U 52, Nuneaton Borough 52, Tonbridge 52, Dover 51, Corby Town 45, King's Lynne 45, Cheltenham Town 43, Folkestone Town 40, Canterbury City 36, Yiewsley 32, Ramsgate Athletic 31, Trowbridge Town 31, Burton Albion 30, Gloucester City 29, Sittingbourne 27, Ashford Town 24, Barry Town 17, Tunbridge Wells United 14.

UK STORIES

Compiled by Micky Brock

HEADING FOR GLORY

Arsenal maintained their tilt for the title by defeating Newcastle 3-1 at Highbury on Saturday, a result leaves them four points behind Manchester United with three games in hand.

But manager Arsene Wenger refused to be drawn into any kind of psychological warfare with United boss Alex Ferguson. Wenger insisted: "My philosophy is to go from game to game and let others speak. I have only positive thoughts.

"We must keep everything going until the end of the season. Then we will accept the verdict of others. There are no negative thoughts in our minds. We are concentrating only on playing positively."

Arsenal, who played Blackburn last night, were to be reinforced by Dennis Bergkamp's return following a three-match suspension.

Newcastle's defeat at Highbury became even more painful for Kenny Dalglish's men given results below them in the relegation zone. They slipped to 16th, two places above the drop, while Spurs, defeated 2-0 at Chelsea, are immediately below them.

Barnsley and Bolton both won derby matches 2-1. The Oakwell side defeated Sheffield Wednesday while Colin Todd's team beat Blackburn.

I'LL COURT UNITED

Jaap Stam is ready to go to court to ensure he can join Manchester United and become the most expensive defender in the world.

The 26-year-old Dutch international defender is furious that PSV Eindhoven rejected United's $22 million bid last week when chairman Martin Edwards flew to Holland to make a personal bid to sign the player.

Now he is poised to take legal action to make a 'dream move' to Old Trafford.

He has two options open, either through the civil courts or a Dutch FA tribunal - a course previously followed successfully by fellow countryman Henrik Larsen when he won the right to join Celtic from Feyenoord last summer.

The tribunal can rule in favour of any player — even under contract — who can improve his financial status by joining a new club within the EEC.

Stam is convinced that he will join United before he leaves with the Dutch squad to prepare for the World Cup finals in France.

"PSV may have turned down United's offer but there are other ways for me to get away," he said. 'The only thing I want is to be a United player when the new season starts. I want to play for them in the European Champions League.

"I want to wear a United shirt on the first day of next season. I will have a United shirt with me in my bag as I travel to the World Cup. I will have a United contract in my safe at home before I leave for France."

Stam believes the move could even happen as early as this week. "It is a ridiculous attitude from the club that they are not happy to accept $22 million. They bought me for 2.2m from Willem II two years ago.

"There is no other player in Europe who has multiplied his value tenfold during that time. They can make a mega-profit on me."

A prime reason for his haste is that his wife is pregnant with their first child.

"This is going to be the most important summer of my life. I am going to be a dad, I'm going to my first ever World Cup and I am going to move to England.

"There is no doubt in my mind about joining United. I was impressed Mr Edwards took the trouble to fly to Holland to try and sign me, even though he was limping with an injured leg.

"Which player can say United's top man came in personally for them when he could not even walk properly?"

STAUNTON TO MOVE

Steve Staunton will collect an astonishing $12 million package by signing for Spurs this summer.

Spurs believe they will recruit Staunton from Aston Villa as the full force of the Bosman freedom of contract charter bites in English football.

The 29-year-old Republic of Ireland defender has turned down a $45,000-a-week, four-year contract with Villa and will allow his current agreement to expire on June 30.

In the past, England-based players have been able to cash in at the end of their contracts by moving abroad as free agents. For the first time this summer, there will be similar transfers internally.

Newcastle goalkeeper Shaka Hislop and Leeds striker Rod Wallace will be two other high-profile free agents.

If Staunton was under contract, Villa would slap a $8 million fee on him.

Recruiting Staunton as a free agent becomes a major attraction for Spurs but the biggest beneficiary is the player, who will be guaranteed millionaire status.

Staunton was sold for just $2.5m by Graeme Souness when he was in charge at Liverpool nearly seven years ago. He later admitted it was his biggest mistake in a three-year spell in the Anfield hot-seat.

He would love to put that right by taking Staunton to Benfica, but he cannot match Spurs' lucrative offer. While Spurs' wage bill soars, their outlay on transfers will be kept in check by this kind of transaction.

Retaining their Premiership status is a critical factor in the deal, but the signing of an accomplished left-sided defender has been a major priority this season.

McILROY IN RACE SLUR

Macclesfield boss Sammy McIlroy has angrily denied an allegation of racism made against his side by Lincoln goalkeeper Barry Richardson.

Richardson has claimed racial abuse by Macclesfield players led to a mass brawl and his dismissal for kicking an opponent at Moss Rose last Saturday.

McIlroy said: "This accusation is all lies. Richardson is trying to make up for the fact that he made a fool of himself."

The incident is currently under investigation by the Football Association who have asked to view a video of the match.

HESKEY'S FOXY OFFER

Leicester City manager Martin O'Neill is set to offer Emile Heskey a new big-money deal to stay at Filbert Street.

Heskey has scored only five goals this season and the teenage striker was still looking for his first away goal, which came along with a second against Crystal Palace at the weekend.

But O'Neill said: "Things have not gone well for him this season but I'm convinced he can become a 20-goals-a-season striker.

"If we're going to have any ambition at Leicester we've got to try to keep him at least until the Millennium."

Heskey, who has a year left on his contract, has been linked with a $12 million move to Liverpool.

HEARTS CRASH IN DERBY

Hibernian dealt a crushing blow to Hearts' chances of winning their first Scottish championship in 38 years when they defeated their Edinburgh rivals 2-1.

A wonderful goal from substitute Kevin Harper 10 minutes from the final whistle at Easter Road saw the bottom club upset the form book and raise supporters' hopes it could yet stay in the premier division, Hearts remain in third place.

Six players were booked in a dreadful first-half in the Edinburgh derby when football gave way to no-nonsense tackling.

But things improved after half-time and Hibs stunned the visitors when Barry Lavety put them ahead in the 57th minute with a solo goal. Lavety drifted in from the wing before firing a left-foot shot past goalkeeper Gilles Rousset.

Hearts went for broke and threw on three substitutes in the 72nd minute, one the club's record goalscorer John Robertson.

He scored with his first touch of the ball a minute later when he curled a 25-yard free-kick into the Hibs net for his 27th goal in derby matches.

But Hibs substitute Harper had the final word. The Scotland U/21 international used his pace to get away from his markers before curling a left foot shot past Rousset and registering his first goal in 15 months.

Hibernian have now closed the gap at the bottom to five points on Dunfermline and Dundee United, who drew 0-0 against St Johnstone and Aberdeen respectively.

Kilmarnock's hopes of moving into fourth spot were dented by a late equaliser from Motherwell's Stefan Linqvist. His 81st minute goal cancelled out a 27th minute effort from Kilmarnock's Gary Holt.

TV CARVE-UP

STV and BSkyB have clinched an amazing $40 million carve-up of televised Scottish football next season, leaving the BBC without top-flight coverage.

STV and Sky have sealed a 'pre-contract' agreement with the top 10 breakaway clubs that will ensure more than 40 live games in the three domestic competitions next season.

The bonanza for Rangers, Celtic and the rest is provided by Sky who will pay most of the $20 million-a-season fee to show 25 live games on Thursday nights in the new top division.

TICKETS FOR THE BOYS

Scottish football's ruling classes last night voted themselves 606 priceless World Cup tickets out of the Tartan Army's measly 10,000 allocation.

The SFA Council determined that its 46 members will have the right to buy one ticket each for personal use for each of the games against Brazil, Norway and Morocco.

And the 78 member clubs — including the likes of Burntisland Shipyard, Golspie Sutherland FC and Threave Rovers — were allocated two tickets for each France 98 game.

It cuts the tickets available to Scotland Travel Club members out of the 5,000 awarded by FIFA for the June 10 game with Brazil and the 2,500 for the other two games.

More tickets will be lost to manager Craig Brown, his backroom staff and the 22-man squad, although how many each player will receive has "not yet been decided" according to spokesman Andy Mitchell.

The 12,000-strong official Travel Club must now await their personal verdicts by letter with the criteria being how they backed Scotland during the qualifying campaign — like going to the Estonia match that never was — and length of service.

"We are trying to be as fair as possible and have laid down the criteria to try and reward those who helped Scotland qualify by going to qualifying games and length of membership of the Travel Club," said Mitchell.

Minor clubs have been "advised" that their two tickets should go to "directors, committee members or coaching staff" and banned from auctioning them in a club bar, for instance.

Players like Colin Hendry look like receiving as few as six or eight tickets each compared to 20 at Euro 96. SFA staff will not receive an allocation with chief executive Jim Farry's place only secure via the official delegation for each game which will be 40-strong, including the players and backroom staff.

Book Reviews

By Micky Brock

Australian Sports Almanac 1998

ISBN 1-86498-006-0 (Hardie Grant Books)

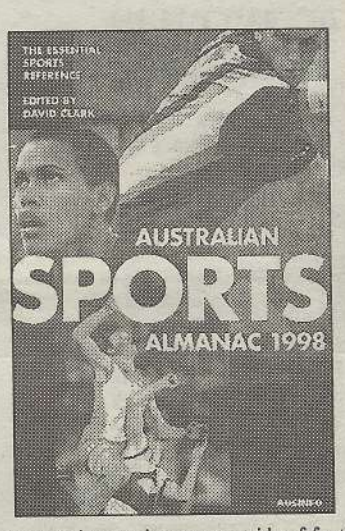
Not a publication just about soccer, but that is obviously where we concentrate our reviewing efforts.

The book consists of some 450 plus pages and covers most sports, but the soccer section leaves little to be desired as it contains a quite comprehensive look at the 1996/97 season in focus, and offers a lot more.

How many people knew that Sergio Melta (Adelaide City 1977-95) is the NSL record holder for most appearances (445), or that Hakoah Eastern Suburbs were runners-up to West Adelaide in the second NSL championship in 1978 after winning it the previous year?

To add to this, the tome includes the full list of top scorers for each season, since the competition's inception, and who they played for, most goals in a single match, the winners of the 'Warren', 'Marston' and 'Papasavas' Medals, the League Cup plus all the international results, teams, scorers, substitutes (including times), as the record reads: Australia - P19 W14 D3 L2 F49 A15 (not a bad set of figures in anyone's language).

It doesn't stop here as we go on to read a summary of ALL of Australia's full international results/opponents from 1922 through to 1997. The Australian Sports Almanac 1998 is edited by David Clark, and most thoroughly he has done it too, and it sells for $24.95 and is available now in all good book stores.



Even I have an interest in sports outside of football (not a passion though), and the other sports listed are covered in the same way. And if that wasn't enough, over 350 Australian sporting greats are profiled.

To add the cherry to the top, there are some terrific action photographs of many of the sports and personalities mentioned.

ABSW Verdict? A very time consuming effort, one you would expect to be just plain facts and figures? WRONG! Extremely well put together, layout is first class and certainly worth the cover price alone. If anything, it's priced too cheaply and ABSW, along with Hardie Grant Books, are giving one lucky reader the chance to win a copy this week and next. See below for conditions of entry.

1/ The editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into,

2/ ALL correct entries received by Monday, April 20 will be placed in a hat and the first drawn shall be deemed the winner,

3/ Entries MUST be made on the official coupon supplied on page 2 of this issue (no faxes, photocopies etc. will be accepted).

4/ Simply fill in the missing letters, print your name, address and telephone number in the space provided and send to us at the usual address and don't forget to mark your envelope with 'Competition' in the top left hand corner,

5/ Don't forget to post your entry in!

Italian Affair

By Joe Russo

LAZIO FINISHED?

After their recent 0-1 loss at home in Rome to Juventus, Lazio seem out of the race for the 'scudetto'. It would now appear Inter and Juventus will fight it out.

Lazio's amazing run of 24 consecutive games, in all competitions (Italian Cup, UEFA Cup and league), going undefeated, finally came to a shattering halt.

Without doubt Lazio have had their best season in many a year. They bought well in the close-season with Boksic, Jugovic and Mancini, combined with a new coach, Sven Goran Eriksson, and have put together an amazing run which will be remembered for a long while yet.

AC MILAN IN DOLDRUMS

AC Milan's recent 0-1 loss to Bari was the ultimate insult to their supporters — a multi-million dollar team losing to a small provincial outfit.

Then again times have certainly changed for Milan in the last few years. Also recently they were beaten easily by both Juventus and Inter and strugglers Lecce and Brescia managed to hold them for draws.

Milan will finish the season mid-table, which must be a major disappointment for all concerned at the club. They bought well, coach Fabio Capello returned but it all seemed not to click.

For supporters of the famous black and red stripes, they will just have to wait for next year.

TALENT SCOUTS DOWN UNDER

Believed to have been in Australia recently were two talent scouts from glamour club Juventus. One of the two was their goalkeeper coach Ivano Bordon.

Bordon played for many years at Inter in the 1970s and early 1980s. He finished his career at Sampdoria in the mid-80s when Walter Zenga joined Inter.

Bordon played over 20 times for Italy and was reserved keeper in Spain 1982 when Italy won the World Cup. Unfortunately Bordon spent many a game on the bench for Italy because at the time the 'numero uno' was none other than Dino Zoff.

Now Juventus is a club that searches the world for talent and over recent seasons have sold many of their best players while still at their peak. Vialli, Baggio, Ravanelli, Vieri and Lombardo are some shining examples.

In this way Juve stand to gain from transfers and at the same time bring on the younger players they have 'unearthed' in some minor competition. Let's not forget that defender, Moreno Torricelli was virtually taken from 'park' soccer a few seasons ago.

Juve's number two, Rampulla, is 36-years-old! So it makes perfect sense to come 'down under', and to Adelaide in particular.

EUROPEAN CUPS

Starting tonight (Tuesday) both Lazio and Inter have the chance of making it an all-Italian final of the UEFA Cup. A couple of years ago Parma and Juventus also played in an all-Italian final.

Lazio, who won away in Madrid 1-0 over Christian Vieri's Atletico, should be favourites to go through in Rome. For the Spaniards it will be an enormous task to beat Lazio in Rome.

Inter, on the other hand, have a tough away trip to Moscow and they face locals Spartak. Having won 2-1 at the San Siro, Inter could comfortably play for a draw.

This, however, could be dangerous. Spartak have an away-goal and will be eager in front of their home fans to upset their more fancied rivals.

On Wednesday, in the Champions League, Juventus are away to Monaco having won 4-1 in Turin.

Juventus struggled in the early rounds of the Champions League but should now comfortably make it into the final. Once again Juventus have managed to prove their critics wrong.

Last year they were upset in the final by Borussia Dortmund, and that experience should make them aware about under estimating the opposition.

And finally, on Thursday, Vicenza travel to Stamford Bridge to play Chelsea. The Italian minnows won 1-0 at home but Gianluca Vialli's men will be primed for revenge and should make it through to the final.

Vicenza had previously never gone past the first round of the Cup Winners' Cup, so no matter what happens they will surely never forget this season in Europe.

ROUND 30 PREVIEW

Inter — Udinese

In Milan this game should be a real beauty. Udinese have been in good form all season while Inter are still chasing the title and have more to play for and should win.

Empoli - Juventus

Minnows Empoli could really throw a spanner in the works if they could manage at least a point against Juve, however, it is most unlikely.

In Other Games:

Piacenza v Bari
Roma v Brescia
Lecce v Parma
Atalanta v Fiorentina
Vicenza v Lazio
Bologna v Milan
Napoli v Sampdoria

Greek News

THE FAT LADY SINGS

Olympiakos Piraeus look set to capture the Greek First Division League championship for the second year in a row after a decisive win against challengers Panathinaikos last weekend.

Although five matches remain in the Greek season, Olympiakos are six points clear of second-placed Panathinaikos and are unlikely to be caught.

The Piraeus team beat their arch-rivals 2-0, adding to a 3-1 triumph earlier in the season. In the unlikely event that the teams finish level on points at the top of the league, Olympiakos would take the title on the back of those two wins.

Olympiakos coach, Dusan Bajevic, joined the team last season and led Olympiakos to their first championship for 10 years. He had previously won four league titles with AEK Athens, who are currently third with 63 points and struggling to hold their position against a surging PAOK Thessaloniki, three points behind.

ROMANIA 2 GREECE 1

Two goals in the second-half by Viorel Moldovan and Constantin Barbu helped Romania to a 2-1 victory over Greece in a World Cup warm-up match for the home team midweek.

Coventry City striker Moldovan opened the score in the 62nd minute when he headed home a corner taken by Dorinel Munteanu, the best player on the field. Moldovan's replacement, Barbu, widened the gap to 2-0 some ten minutes before the end after Greek goalkeeper Ilias Atmatzis could only fend off a powerful shot from Romanian striker Radu Niculescu

Greek forward Alexis Alexandris scored a fine header six minutes from time.

It was a great win for Romanian coach Anghel Iordanescu who will take over as trainer of the Greek team from July 15.

Romania were without key players Gheorghe Hagi, Gheorghe Popescu and Iulian Filipescu, playing for their club Galatasaray in the Turkish Cup final.

Romania: Bogdan Stelea, Dan Petrescu, Daniel Prodan, Anton Dobos, Dorinel Munteanu, Constantin Galca, Gabriel Popescu, Alin Stoica, Ovidiu Stinga, Viorel Moldovan, Radu Niculescu.

Greece: Ilias Atmatzidis, Stratos Apostolakis, Kyriakos Karataides, Giannis Kalitzakis, Mihalis Kasapis, Nikos Dabizas, Thodoros Zagorakis, Kostas Frantzeskos, Zisis Vrizas, Giordios Georgioades, Grigoris Georgatos.

WHEN IT RAINS, IT POURS

With the Greek title effectively wrapped up, Olympiakos have announced what surely must be the signing of the season in Greek football.

The Reds, not content with a front line containing the likes of Ilya Ivic, have strengthened their squad with the acquisition of legendary Bulgarian striker Hristo Stoichkov.

Although the wrong side of 30, Hristo is an international class player and with a couple of years left to him, he truly will be the jewel in Olympiakos' crown.

Club President Petro Kokkalis has announced further signings are imminent with Vasili Laki (Paneliakos) and Paraskeva Antza (Xanthi) the immediate local targets and a big name from the Seria A another possibility.

Hristo Stoichkov

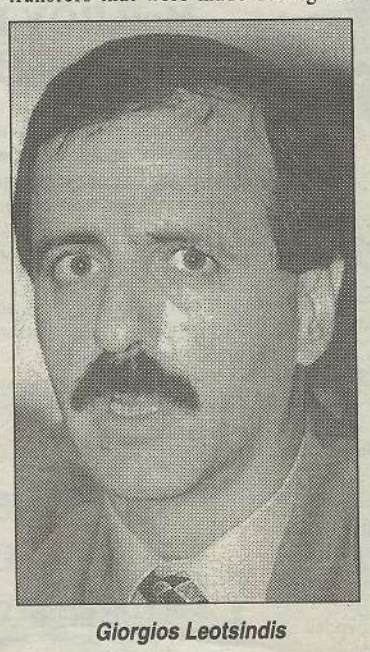
THE DOUBLE HEADED EAGLE IN A SWAN DIVE

Well, when AEK thought things couldn't get any worse. Coach Dumitri Dumitriu is now a closed chapter at the club as owners ENIC decided to pay out the remainder of his contract and terminate his services immediately.

"Dou Dou" Dumitriu

The club has been left in the hands of caretaker-coach Ardonis Minou who will guide the club for the remainder of the season.

The post-Dimitriu era has already begun with the club keen to sign a high calibre coach and names such as Arrigo Sacchi (unlikely) have been thrown about. ENIC has promised fans quality signings during the summer to compensate for the transfers that were made during the current season.



Giorgios Leotsindis

It will be interesting to see who, where, when and how much.

Additionally, Vice-President Giorgios Leotsindis has resigned from the club while club President Laki Nikolaou received a note of confidence.

THE LOWER DIVISIONS

In Division Two there are three clubs striving for promotion, namely Aris, Panelefsiakos and Ethnikos Asteras.

In recent weeks Aris have broken clear with a four point lead, a remarkable achievement for a club in crisis earlier in the season with mounting expenses, little money and an abortive sale to maverick club owner Michael Trohanas.

At the bottom, the relegation battle is in full swing with the bottom four teams five points clear of safety.

Kastoria are already relegated with only 12 points from 26 games and barring a miracle of biblical proportion, will be joined by Panargiakos, Lyki and Levadiakos.

In the Northern Division of the split Third Division Agios Nikolaos are enjoying a four point lead over Marko with Ialisos a further two points adrift.

In the South, Pierikos are leading Yiannena by three points who in turn are trailed by Olympiakos Volou.

The Fourth Division is split into six groups with the current leaders being Atromitos Athinon, Agersani Naksou, Ahaiki, Karditzsa, Apollon Krias Vrisis and Kikliasos.

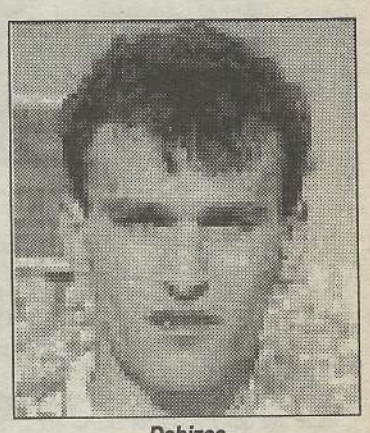
Good luck with those promotion places boys.

A GREEK AT WEMBLEY

Well ... how about that. Three Greeks played their part in the English FA Cup semi-finals (Nikos Dabizas for Newcastle and Vasili Borbokis and Triayanos Dellas for Sheffield United) and the winner is ... Nikos Dabizas.

The three internationals know each other well and, according to Dabizas, he will be fulfilling a childhood dream if chosen in playing in the final of the most romantic (and oldest) football tournament in the world, at the home of football: Wembley.

The final promises to be a cracker between Arsenal (chasing the English double) and Newcastle and it probably will be the last at Wembley, and despite supporting neither club here's hoping for a Newcastle win — imagine if Dabizas got the winner!!!



Dabizas

TOP SCORERS

24: Hristo Waziecha (PAO)
22: Ilya Ivic (Olympiakos)
20: G.X. Georgiakis (PAO)
16: Demis Nikolaidis (AEK)
14: George Frantzeskos (PAOK)

SOUTH AMERICA

— Compiled by Mario Etchart —

WE WILL WIN WORLD CUP NUMBER FIVE, SAYS ZAGALLO

Argentina and Brazil, the two giants of South American football, will meet in a friendly at Rio de Janeiro's Maracana stadium on April 29.

It will be a confrontation between two favourites to win the World Cup, a build up preparation for both squads that will give their respective coaches a measure of their potential.

The game has attracted the attention of the whole world, and most of the coaches involved in the World Cup will be at Maracana stadium to watch the clash.

History shows that since 1914 Argentina and Brazil played 83 matches with 25 draws, 29 victories for the Argentines and 29 for the Brazilians. So, on April 29, one of them may be able to break the deadlock.

Between both teams, 253 goals were scored with 132 in favour of Argentina (52.17 %) and 121 for Brazil (47.82 %).

This match will be Brazil's last before the start of the World Cup and, according to Mario Zagallo: "We will travel to France with four World Cups won and we will return with the fifth".

The Brazilian Football Federation wanted to play the friendly in Fortaleza, but the Argentine Association asked to play at the Maracana or Sao Paulo's Morumbi stadium.

In the end, the Argentines won the decision and the match will be played at Maracana's stadium, with a possible crowd of 120,000.

It will be Brazil's first international at the famous Maracana since September 19 1993, when they defeated Uruguay, 2-0, courtesy of two goals from Romario, and they qualified for the 1994 World Cup as a result

The Brazilians won their first World Cup in 1958, in Sweden, when the South Americans beat the home team 5-2 in the final, starting the brilliant career of a young footballer nicknamed 'Pele'.

Since then, Brazil have won another three World Cups, in 1962 in Chile, in 1970 in Mexico and in 1994 in the USA.

Brazil (four times), Argentina (two times, 1978 and 1986) and Uruguay (twice, 1930 and 1950) are the only South American countries to have won the trophy.

It will be a great effort to win the World Cup in Europe, particularly with Germany, Euro 96 champs, and hosts France both dangerous.

LIBERTADORES CUP SUCCESS STORIES

America and Bucaramanga (Colombia), and Barcelona of Ecuador are in Group 1, Gremio and Vasco da Gama (Brazil), and America of Mexico in Group 2, Olimpia and Cerro Porteno (Paraguay), and Colo Colo of Chile in Group 3, Bolivian champion Bolivar and the Uruguayans Penarol and Nacional in Group 4 and Argentine champion River Plate and Peruvian champion Alianza Lima, together with defending champion Cruzeiro of Brazil, have all qualified for the second round of the 1998 Libertadores Cup, the major championship at club level in South America.

The last berth, between Colon of Argentina and last year's Libertadores Cup runners-up, Sporting Cristal of Peru, has to be decided when Cristal hosts Colon in Lima. Colon need only a draw to go through while the Peruvians must win to qualify for the second round.

Uruguayan champion, Penarol (five times), Nacional of Uruguay (three times), Cruzeiro of Brazil (three times), Gremio of Brazil (twice), Paraguayan champion Olimpia (twice), Argentine champion River Plate (twice) and Chilean champion Colo Colo (once) are previous winners of the Libertadores Cup.

The teams so far eliminated are Oriente Petrolero (Bolivia), Universidad Catolica (Chile), Guadalajara (Mexico) and Deportivo Quito (Ecuador).

HIGHEST SCORERS

Group 1:
Ricardo Perez (America, Mexico) with 3 goals

Group 2:
Luizao (Vasco da Gama, Brazil) with 4 goals

Group 3:
Luis Alberto Monzon (Olimpia, Paraguay) and Hector Tapia (Colo Colo, Chile) with 4 goals

Group 4:
Sergio Joao (Bolivar, Bolivia), with 5 goals

Group 5:
Juan Pablo Angel (River Plate, Argentina), with 5 goals

ARGENTINE LEAGUE

Chilean international striker Marcelo Salas, in his return to football was instrumental in River Plate's 3-1 victory over Union Santa Fe in the Argentine League second phase.

Although the brilliant forward didn't score, he had a good game and was involved in two of River's goals.

Argentine international attacking midfielder Marcelo Gallardo, striker Sebastian Rambert and young midfielder Santiago Solari scored for the defending champions.

Meanwhile, the struggling Boca Juniors came from behind to draw 2-2 with Colon Santa Fe. Gustavo Sandoval and Esteban Fuertes netted for Colon while Boca's striker Martin Palermo scored twice for his team.

In another important match, current leader Velez Sarsfield defeated Estudiantes de La Plata, 2-1, and maintained a two point lead over the surprise pack, Gimnasia y Esgrima of Jujuy, who just managed a 1-1 draw with Platense.

Other results:

Independiente 0 Newell's Old Boys 2, Rosario Central 2 Racing Club 0, Deportivo Espanol 2 Huracan 3, San Lorenzo 2 Argentinos Juniors 2, Lanus 3 Gimnasia y Tiro Salta 0.

After nine rounds:

Velez Sarsfield 20 points, Gimnasia Jujuy and Lanus 18; River Plate 17; Gimnasia y Esgrima La Plata and Independiente 15; Rosario Central and San Lorenzo 14; Boca Juniors 12; Newell's Old Boys, Estudiantes and Argentinos Juniors 11; Ferro Carril Oeste, Racing Club and Platense 10; Colon 9; Gimnasia y Tiro Salta, Huracan and Union 6; Espanol 4.

Marcelo Salas

Boca Juniors thrash Mexico in friendly

Argentine First Division club Boca Juniors defeated the Mexican national team 3-1 in a friendly played at Boca's 'La Bombonera' stadium in front of only 5,000 spectators.

The Mexicans, who started better, dominating the first ten minutes of the game with an aggressive style of play, went 1-0 ahead in the second minute when defender Jaime Ordiales scored with a header.

But the local outfit took control of the match from then on and equalised through youngster striker Pablo Islas in the 22nd minute.

In the second-half again the Mexicans started better, playing a skilful brand of football but couldn't find the way to break Boca's solid defence.

The Argentines went 2-1 ahead in the 66th minute when attacking midfielder Diego Latorre lobbed the ball over the advancing Mexican goalkeeper Jorge Campos.

Eight minutes before the end Argentine U/20 international defender Walter Samuel netted the third for Boca Juniors

Mexican coach Manuel Lapuente said after the match: "We played well but missed too many chances while Boca Juniors created fewer chances but scored them. They dominated the last 15 minutes of the match when we lost control and paid the penalty. It was a good opportunity to see our weaknesses an try to improve from now on."

Mexico have been grouped with South Korea, Belgium and Holland at France 98, with the Dutch providing potentially their biggest test in this even group.

BOCA JUNIORS: Cordoba, Castillo, Matellan, Samuel, Arruabarrena, Solano, Serna, Cagna (Calvo 76), Latorre (Rosada 84), Caniggia (Herrera 87), Islas (Ruiz 74).

MEXICO: Campos, Carmona, Villa, Almaguer, Ordiales (Cepeda 43), Palencia, Gavino, Luna (Bernal 54), Blanco, Luis Hernandez, Garcia Aspe.

URUGUAYAN LEAGUE

Montevideo Wanderers maintained the lead in the Uruguayan League first phase despite its 1-1 draw at home with Villa Espanola, while second placed Defensor Sporting defeated Liverpool 2-1 and River Plate beat Danubio 2-1.

Wanderers went 1-0 ahead with a goal scored by Martin Garcia, but Sergio Fernandez, through a penalty, equalised for Villa Espanola midway through the second-half.

In the match between Defensor Sporting and Liverpool, Brazilian striker Emerson and Uruguayan international defender Tabare Silva scored for Defensor while Uruguayan U/20 international Alejandro Correa netted for Liverpool.

The tussle between River Plate and Danubio saw Martin Rodriguez and Raul Otero score for River, while former Uruguayan U/20 international Gabriel Miglionico netted for Danubio.

In other games:

Rentistas and **Bella Vista** drew 1-1 and defending champion **Penarol** defeated **Huracan Buceo** 2-1.

The match between Nacional and Rampla Juniors was postponed.

Standings: Wanderers 8 points; Defensor and River Plate 7; Nacional, Penarol and Vella Vista 6; Danubio and Rentistas 3; Liverpool, Rampla Juniors, Huracan Buceo and Villa Espanola 2.

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